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POETIC DEFAMILIARIZATION: BLAKE'S ANTI-LOCKEAN LANGUAGE

by

BRIAN TURNER

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Date: April 18, 1983

to Linda and Lenore

and

in memory of my father

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines William Blake's reaction to John Locke's theory of mind, which Blake considered reductively systematic and therefore deleterious to human existence. The examination is divided into four chapters. In Chapter One, the argument moves from a general discussion of poetic language and the concept of "defamiliarization" to introductory remarks about Blake's opposition to Lockean epistemology. The chapter suggests that Blake's use of language, though inevitably linked to linguistic and literary "systems," struggles to defamiliarize those objects and habits of systematic thinking that An Essay Concerning Human Understanding exhibits and, by virtue of Locke's influence, perpetuates; in short, Blake's poetic defamiliarization, aided by pictorial techniques, arouses the reader from Lockean habits of thought. Chapter Two then details Blake's antipathy for Locke's empirical materialism, his theories of abstraction, memory, language, and perception of time and space. Blake's opposing view of mind is reconstructed in the process of detailing his antipathies. According to this view, percepts depend on the perceiver's state of mind rather than on what Locke calls "external sensible objects"; when the mind only reasons or remembers, Blake believes, the reasoner scarcely exists, but when man activates imagination, he transforms particular percepts into visionary truths and revitalizes human existence. The third and fourth chapters consider how Blake's poems activate imagination by defamiliarizing Lockean

concepts and habits of thought. In order to analyze the Songs of Innocence and of Experience, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, and Jerusalem, Blake's defamiliarizing techniques are loosely classified into three categories: figurative, structural, and thematic. Figurative and structural devices operate in all three considered works as a means of undermining or exploding the very forms needed for imaginative expression and preventing conventional response to the texts. In The Marriage and Jerusalem, Blake also develops themes that arouse awareness of both "mind" and the reading process; such themes, as the final section of Chapter Three and the closing chapter on Jerusalem indicate, direct and intensify reader response to Blake's anti-Lockean figures and structures. It is further argued in the final chapter that this three-pronged attack on Lockean thinking eventually results in a text without perceptible "general" form; in Jerusalem, Blake's defamiliarizing techniques obviate abstractive or reasoned responses so effectively that the reader must focus on "minute particulars," which Blake believes are source and mode of all real knowledge.

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Thanks also to my typist, who "kept the Divine Vision in time of trouble" --that is, in March, in the early hours of morning.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

I. Introduction: Arousing the Faculties to Act 1

II. "Mental Things are alone Real":
Blake's Anti-Lockean Outlook 16

III. The Songs and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell ..50

IV. Jerusalem 86

***

NOTES 121

BIBLIOGRAPHY 142

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Arousing the Faculties to Act

I

The belief that poetic language is somehow special seems fundamental to most literary analysis. Most literary theorists, and many semanticists, linguists, and philosophers of language, concur in the view that poetic language has a peculiar capacity to lift us above our habitual manner of thinking. The British linguist Geoffrey Leech focuses this view by defining poetry as a form of "linguistic creativity" that breaks through "the conceptual bonds with which language constrains us."[1] For some theorists, this bond-breaking signifies a heightened awareness of language itself; according to G.D. Martin, poetry "raises into consciousness more of the content of the language we speak than does ordinary discourse."[2] Others often emphasize that the breaking of such conceptual bonds leads us to a heightened awareness of what is beyond language. In Philip Wheelwright's opinion, "poetic language ... partly creates and partly discloses certain hitherto unknown, unguessed aspects of What Is."[3] The two views are really opposite sides of the same coin: when language is brought to our attention, we inevitably become more aware of both language and that to which language refers:

> Poetic language is no less about reality than any other use of language but refers to it by the means of a complex strategy which implies, as an essential component, a suspension and seemingly an abolition of the ordinary reference attached to descriptive language. This suspension, however, is only the negative condition of a second-order reference, of an indirect reference built on the ruins of the direct reference. This reference is called second-order only with respect to the primacy of the reference of ordinary language. For, in another respect, it constitutes the primordial reference to the extent that it suggests, reveals, unconceals --or whatever you say-- the deep structures of reality to which we are related as mortals who are born into this world and who dwell in it for a while.[4]

As Ricoeur goes on to explain, this second-order reference is made because it is our nature to seek for and predicate some meaning in language. Poetic language is effective because "when the link between concept and referent is broken, we are forced to re-establish it in different terms."[5]

In his remarks quoted above, Paul Ricoeur himself employs a vocabulary which, though not poetic, provokes awareness. Like Heidegger, whose vocabulary is at times similar, he displaces common words from their common contexts or neologizes in order to make us attend more closely to meaning. Yet Ricoeur's modern Heideggerian vocabulary, his seemingly mystical use of such words as "unconceals" or "dwells" amid a vocabulary of modern techno-linguistic precision, should not blind us to the fact that his comments are founded on beliefs long held by students of poetry. In a well-known preface written almost two hundred years ago, William Wordsworth claimed that in his attempt to present "ordinary things in an unusual aspect" he had employed "language really

used by men"; but as Coleridge soon pointed out, Wordsworth's language was "no more to be found in the phraseology of low and rustic life than in that of any other class."[6] Half a century earlier, the voice of an age that the Romantics had fundamentally rejected anticipated Coleridge's view of poetic language; Dr. Johnson insisted that "novelty," though never successfully an end in itself, was indispensible to good literature.[7] However different in other respects, in this regard Johnson and Coleridge agree: any poet determined to arouse his readers cannot, and never could, use ordinary language, at least not in an ordinary way.

A large and varied group of scholars has of late attempted to refine this assumption, and has accordingly suggested a variety of terms to define the methods poets employ to disclose or unconceal "What Is." Perhaps the most convenient of these terms is R.H. Stacy's "defamiliarization." Relying heavily on theoretical essays by Victor Shklovsky and Jan Mukarovsky, Stacy defines the central term of <u>Defamiliarization in Language and Literature</u> in words that sound peculiarly Wordsworthian; it is, he says, the "effect by presenting ordinary things in an unusual form or an unusual perspective."[8] The definition is intentionally broad, in part because Stacy wants it to embrace the concepts of several theorists. But Stacy avoids restrictive definitions also because he recognizes that "defamiliarization" embraces a wealth of literary techniques, most of which still await a contemporary classification scheme. Stacy's own classifica-

tion of defamiliarizing devices compares with a traditional rhetoric; he claims that traditional terms such as hyperbata, anacloutha, antonomasia, hendiadys, and adynata can still help us analyze literary language. What is new is Stacy's claims for the linguistic purpose of such devices. They are not, he says, signs of pomp and ceremony --as modern scholars might think them-- nor are they merely signs of the rhetorician's verbal agility, but are instead signs that the writer is striving to make us more aware of language and thus more aware of the uncommonness of language's "common" referents. As Shklovsky says, "perception becomes habitual"[9]: any reader who is to be roused from the bonds of conceptual or perceptual slumber must be aroused by the poignancy of words. A writer's use of tropes or schemes often defamiliarizes language, and defamiliarization frees us from habitual response by reviving our awareness of objects of perception, our awareness of ideas, and even our awareness of the very acts of thinking and perceiving.

The task of defamiliarizing is, however, more difficult than Stacy suggests, for within the process of employing literary forms or devices to arouse readers there lies a danger: the author risks invoking a trail of associations with which such devices are connected, and therefore threatens to undercut his very purpose. Literary forms and devices arouse memories of literary and historical traditions; if an author wants to free his readers from a habitual manner of thinking, he cannot simply borrow such forms and devices, for if he

does he inadvertently transforms a habitual manner of thinking about reality into a habitual manner of thinking about literature. Any writer must therefore take account of both linguistic and literary traditions, which are neither mutually exclusive nor identical. This does not mean, however, that he can timidly steer between Scylla and Charybdis: to treat literary traditions and linguistic traditions as dangers to be avoided is to slip, like Swift's literary hack in A Tale of a Tub, into simple-mindedness or madness, to delude oneself with thoughts of complete verbal freedom. The traditions already have us in their grasp, pulled within their currents: every writer who wants to heighten reader awareness of language and reality must decide not if he will struggle with such traditions, but how he will struggle with them.

II

A study of William Blake's poetic language is complicated by Blake's own operative awareness that such problems of tradition and form cannot be segregated from larger questions about tradition. When a writer struggles with linguistic and literary traditions, he struggles with political and philosophical traditions too. Furthermore, as a multitalented artist who very much wanted to rouse his audience from habitual ways of thinking, Blake also had to consider the influence of visual traditions on the reception of his "illuminated manuscripts." Each self-produced text thus

became a complex battleground in which the poet/painter strove to defamiliarize habits of thinking and perceiving and simultaneously wrestle with, rather than reject or ignore, the literary, graphic, linguistic, political, and philosophical traditions that helped form such habits.

But these struggles with tradition are really the rearguard action of Blake's battle with a larger opponent: the systematizing drive of reason. It is this which, if unopposed, brings about habitual perception and familiar reaction to every word, thought, action, and man, and which makes even the unfamiliar familiar soon enough; it is this which systematizes thought into its most uncompromising states: laws, edicts, doctrines, commandments. Like the linguistic and literary traditions it establishes, however, this drive cannot be ignored. No matter how much Blake advocates imagination, reason is a psychological reality and, as Blake knows, a necessity. It brings imaginative thought into being, not by embodying or formalizing thought --though in the most imaginative works of art and literature, perfect formalization of imaginative thought can almost occur-- but by manifesting or suggesting error, thereby provoking realization of truth.[10] To Blake, truth is not something on canvas or paper, but something realized in the mind of the beholder, and it is realized by the beholder only when he exerts imagination through or against the formal body he beholds. Though the most imaginative works are least controlled by the systematizing drive that gives them form, every

formalized body of thought, be it law, theory, poem, or painting, exhibits some degree of systematized reasoning, and systematized reasoning is always erroneous. Since the essence of man, Blake believes, is imagination, and since imagination comes into being as it simultaneously recognizes error and realizes truth, reason is in Blake's view a "necessary enemy"[11]: its very attempts to imprison imagination engender imaginative truths. The struggle between these necessary enemies is "mental warfare"[12]; in Blake's view, it is nothing less than the struggle for existence.

It is in this light that we must study the poetic language of Blake's most complex and elusive texts. His poetry struggles to defamiliarize unquestioned values by exposing errors in them, thereby provoking realization of truth, but in the act of defamiliarizing such ideas, the poetry itself becomes formalized thought. Blake's texts are engaged in a battle they cannot win: they strive to formalize truth, but truth can only be realized in the mind of the beholder; they try to formalize Blake's belief that all formalized thought contains some error. In Blake's final long poem, Jerusalem, this paradox results in a text that tries to undermine or dismantle any larger structural forms that may emerge as it is read, for such forms, as literary or rhetorical system, might otherwise overwhelm Blake's insistence that "All Knowledge is Particular" (637). Even before Blake offers this epistemological credo, however, the reader can sense in earlier works the authorial struggle with form, the constant

endeavour to use erroneous form to make the reader imaginatively reject what Blake simply calls "error." If the reader is to exercise his imagination as Blake tells him to, he must reveal these errors in a text that insists error conceals truth. The poetic language that reveals is thus the poetic language that conceals.

To use Paul Ricoeur's words, the reader must "unconceal" this language. But realizing truth through Blake's text is not simply a matter of finding "errors." It is a matter of finding the systematized forms needed to realize the formless, of sensing that what Blake has to say cannot easily be expressed by the written word. The reader has Blake's help. As Blake says in A Vision of the Last Judgment, "a Man Can only Reject Error by the Advice of a Friend or by the Immediate Inspiration of God" (552). Paradoxically, Blake becomes both friend and enemy: in his works he advises the reader about truth, but in so doing employs erroneous system in the guise of formal structure, for no text can formalize imaginative truth perfectly. What the reader must do is separate the error from the truth, the corporeal from the spiritual, the temporal from the eternal, the garment from the man[13]-- all of which is Blake's way of saying that his audience must appreciate that form is necessary but not an end unto itself. As we are told in Jerusalem, the English language is a "stubborn structure," but without it there would be nothing but "dumb despair" (181).

III

Blake himself found many texts imaginatively provocative, but he believed there was one particular text whose errors needed exposure more than any other: An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Blake thought his contemporaries had, to their detriment, become so familiar with Lockean epistemological theories that they no longer questioned such theories, and so it became Blake's passionate goal, as he began to sense his purpose as a poet and painter, to expose the errors of Lockean epistemology.

We must remember, however, that it is these very errors which allow Blake to exercise his imagination. His mentalistic view of imagination warring against reason not only opposes the Lockean theory of mind, but also comes into being through such opposition. Locke might therefore be considered a "necessary enemy" in Blake's continuous "mental warfare." Though Blake repeatedly and harshly criticized Locke throughout his artistic career, he also acknowledged, in a crucial passage of his final illuminated poem, the importance of Locke and other articulate defenders of reason for the defence of imagination.[14] And knowing that for Blake imaginative existence is existence, we should also understand that Blake exercised his imagination against and on Locke; consequently, the Locke Blake portrays in his writing may seem unlike the Locke we read. By artistically envisioning Locke as the instigator and coordinator of a variety of eighteenth-century epistemological concepts, Blake was better

able to formalize his opposition and thus better exercise both his and our imaginations.

William Blake did little in moderation. The reader of his work will find soon enough that Blake's anti-Lockean view of mind is thorough and extreme. He opposed, in fact, a fundamental presupposition of western civilization, one which Locke himself merely adopted from philosophical tradition: he denied the existence of matter. "Mental things are alone Real," said Blake; there is no "Existence Out of Mind or Thought" (555). This is not, and never was, a popular belief, but at least Berkeley was recognized as a serious philosopher in spite of his immaterialism.[15] As we know from the comments of his contemporaries, the apparent absurdity of such a belief hastened Blake's isolation and disqualified him for years from the serious consideration of all but his fellow "mystics."[16] This belief in immaterialism still tests and intensifies any reading of his work. When a body of poetry snatches <u>verba</u> from <u>res</u> entirely, readers seem to find themselves at a junction without exits, bewildered by a plethora of signs. The reader can no longer rest over familiar sights: every word has become symbolic.

Blake's immaterialist position is a central feature of his thought. Though one cannot fully appreciate the import of this position before closely reading Blake's poems, one can at least anticipate one consequence of the immaterialist presupposition: a new freedom of textual significance. This result is entirely consistent with Blake's purpose. It

allows us to interpret more energetically and thus exercise our own imaginations within and against the Blakean text. Such freedom will be embraced by some, abhorred by others, but without doubt Blake's poetic language will present all readers with a perplexing challenge. As Donald Ault puts it, Blake's language "radically and uncompromisingly opposes the way we normally experience language and the world."[17]

Can we condemn Blake for his notorious "difficulty"? In 1799 the Reverend Doctor Trusler did so; he wrote to Blake to inform the poet/painter that his work required "elucidation" by another writer. Blake's reply tells us much about his awareness of audience:

> You say that I want somebody to Elucidate my Ideas. But you ought to know that What is Grand is necessarily obscure to Weak men. That which can be made Explicit to the Idiot is not worth my care. The wisest of the Ancients considerd what is not too Explicit as the fittest for Instruction because it rouzes the faculties to act. I name Moses Esop Homer Plato (676)

"Rousing the faculties to act" is the primary aim of Blake's poetry, for only in the process of such activation can truth be realized. It is a difficult task that requires subtle measures: he must disturb the reader's habitual reaction to word, line, and colour without awakening a habitual reaction to literature and art; he must formalize the battles between reason and imagination yet warn us that all form is imperfect and in some way false; he must expose the errors of Lockean thinking yet simultaneously depend upon those errors for re-

velation of imaginative truths. In other words, Blake must pit imagination against reason on the latter's own ground, and his readers must battle with yet respect texts that deny their own material existence and defy their own formal being. What results for the reader is "mental warfare"; and Blake would say that unless we enter the fray, we capitulate to Locke and systematic reasoning and surrender our very being.[18]

IV

This study will examine the means by which Blake provokes "mental warfare" and arouses the faculties to act. Though such means are complex and varied, they might be classified into three large groups: figurative, structural, and thematic. The first of these three means will not be examined except insofar as it bears on the other two means, for an examination of figurative language in poetry that is, by the author's own admission, based on the belief that nothing material exists would find an inexhaustible supply of figures. One should perhaps read Blake's poetry under the rubric of Nietzsche's insistence that all language is metaphorical.[19] The other two means, though diffuse and elusive, can be more easily examined. Structurally, Blake's poems accomplish several things. The Songs of Innocence and of Experience and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell implode or explode traditional literary forms or structures to defamiliarize the very forms needed for imaginative expression, and thus they rouse the reader to create, rather than accept,

the "true" and "imaginative" form of the work. This defamiliarization of traditional forms tends more and more towards the local, and consequently the reader of Jerusalem constantly finds his attention arrested by "minute particulars," as Blake calls them. Both early and late poems also use structures or defamiliarize structures in order to defy Lockean epistemological theories of abstraction, succession, memory, time, space, and, above all, language. To support these structural/anti-structural devices, Blake simultaneously develops themes that promote, via references to the act of perceiving (and more specifically, to the act of reading), anti-Lockean ways of thinking and perceiving. Together, as this thesis will suggest, these structural and thematic devices often succeed in provoking textual interpretation, which is the act of imaginatively existing by warring with the formal text.

The second chapter will establish a context for understanding Blake's poetic language by examining the ideas of John Locke and Blake's explicit reactions to them. Though this chapter is in some ways regrettably reductive, alternative approaches seemed less acceptable. To explain the details and possible sources of Locke's popularity in the eighteenth-century, or to account for Blake's possible misinterpretations of Lockean epistemology, would be a much too massive project in itself; to more thoroughly examine one or two central Lockean concepts would undermine Blake's vision of the "whole man" and would contradict his own distaste for

abstracting ideas. Though he did explicitly criticize many Lockean ideas singularly, it is not likely that Blake intentionally singled out any of Locke's ideas for poetic defamiliarization as he wrote. It is more likely that Blake viewed each Lockean idea as part of a wrong-minded philosophy, and that his own poetic techniques grew out of his reaction to an entire complex of abhorrent ideas. The second chapter accordingly tries to integrate Blake's explicit responses to single Lockean ideas into a Blakean world-view and reconstruct a Blakean "theory of mind," thereby establishing a basis for analyzing Blake's specific anti-Lockean techniques.

The third and fourth chapters then examine Blake's work in the light of his explicit reaction to Locke and his implicit theory of mind. Though several works will be considered, the focus of these chapters will be on two of Blake's major pieces, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell and Jerusalem, both because these pieces best reveal his three-pronged attack on Lockean norms, and because they span most of Blake's career and therefore represent the longevity of certain views he held. In the Marriage and Jerusalem, questions about perception almost dominate textual themes; they play a crucial role in directing reader response so that Blake's radical figures and structures can more effectively instigate anti-Lockean "mental warfare."

No serious study of Blake, particularly not a study of Blake's antagonism for a philosophy that divides, classifies, and systematizes, can afford to ignore Blake's visual designs.

Nevertheless, this thesis could have been indefinitely extended had it examined, first, the problematic relationship of Blake's poetry with his designs, and, second, the even more problematic relationship of his designs to Lockean epistemology. Only a great deal of preliminary information about the art of Blake's time and the sister arts tradition could have made such an examination meaningful. As a compromise, dicussion of Blake's designs is reserved for infrequent but, it is hoped, appropriate occasions. The reader must be reminded that Blake's works were printed as illuminated manuscripts: when reading mass-produced, unilluminated editions of Blake's poems we are missing one of Blake's finest means of "rousing the faculties to act."

CHAPTER TWO

"Mental Things are alone Real": Blake's Anti-Lockean Outlook

The work of William Blake is often described in terms of its opposition to Enlightenment norms. There are, for example, full-length critical studies by Erdman, Schorer, and Bronowski detailing Blake's political antipathies;[1] books by Altizer and Davies that discuss Blake's radical theology;[2] a study by Ault that examines Blake's visionary response to Newtonian physics;[3] and articles by Fisher and Hagstrum outlining Blake's total rejection of the Age of Reason.[4] In addition to these studies, several authors include Blake in general studies of radical art or religion.[5] Yet for all these studies of Blake's antipathies, only George Mills Harper, Donald Ault, Harald Kittel, and Northrop Frye have considered Blake's philosophical opposition to John Locke, and even these authors have isolated only certain details of this opposition.[6] This neglect seems particularly odd in view of the fact that virtually every study of Blake details or assumes Blake's essential concern for various questions about mind; such words as "vision," "spirit," "thought," "brain," "image," "wisdom," "mind," "judgment," "imagination," and "intellect" echo not only from the pages of Blake but also from those of Blake

scholars.[7] Given, then, these two facts --Blake's tendencies to focus on epistemological questions and to criticize contemporary thought --one might well wonder why Blake's reaction to Locke has not been explored more extensively. After all, Locke was certainly the foremost authority on most eighteenth-century epistemological questions. Indeed, according to Ernst Cassirer, "On all questions of psychology and the theory of knowledge Locke's authority remained practically unchallenged throughout the first half of the eighteenth-century."[8]

Like most poets, Blake discussed neither his philosophical sympathies nor his philosophical antipathies in any systematic way. His sporadic sorties into the province of philosophy are always aphoristic, and are often vague --or at least seem so before the reader adapts to Blake's language. Nevertheless, the fact that Blake avoided explicitly systematic discussions of philosophy should not lead us to believe Blake's attitude towards contemporary philosophies was one of indifference or of fleeting interest. We know, for example, that Blake's distaste for An Essay Concerning Human Understanding lasted a lifetime. As he himself tells us in his annotations to Reynolds' Discourses, marked by Blake when he was middle-aged,

> Burke's Treatise on the Sublime is founded on the Opinions of Newton & Locke on this treatise Reynolds has grounded many of his assertions. in all his Discourses. I read Burkes Treatise when very Young at the same time I read Locke on Human Understanding & Bacons Advancement of Learning on

> Every one of these Books I wrote my Opinions & on looking them over find that my notes on Reynolds in this Book are exactly Similar. I felt the same Contempt & Abhorrence then; that I do now. They mock Inspiration & Vision Inspiration & Vision was then & now is & I hope will always Remain my Element my Eternal Dwelling Place. how can I hear it Contemned without returning Scorn for Scorn (650).

This comment is not occasional; the scorn is reflected throughout Blake's poetry, not only by numerous direct and derogatory allusions to Locke, but also by means of various symbolic figures intended to characterize Locke's "Philosophy of the Five Senses" (66).[9]

Blake's opposition to Locke is, however, even more thoroughgoing than his direct and indirect allusions to Locke suggest. He also offers enough poetic commentary on such subjects as perception and imagination that reconstruction of what might be called a Blakean view of mind seems possible, and this view is so thoroughly anti-Lockean that Blake's elusive symbolic cosmology, designed to map out the psychology of a universal mind, can scarcely be understood without some knowledge of Locke's ideas. Michael Phillips is very likely correct in suggesting that Blake's readings of Burke and Locke "antithetically prompted his intellect to question and clarify fundamental premises regarding the nature of language and mind."[10] In some ways, Blake's antipathy for Lockean thought transforms the very character of his poetic language. Yet it is only by taking an intermediate step, by examining Locke's theories and Blake's explicit reactions to them, that the extent of these poetic transformations is revealed.

Such explicit reactions must be studied cautiously. We must recognize, first, that Blake viewed Locke as a "necessary enemy." As far as he was concerned, Locke had adopted and developed mistaken philosophical ideas, but at least he had expressed those ideas honestly, thoroughly, and articulately, and by doing so had enabled Blake and other defenders of imagination to envision their opponent more clearly. What Blake hated most was not an articulate defence of reason, materialism, or empiricism, but an inarticulate or dishonest defence of anything.[11] Furthermore, and more importantly, we must recognize, as Blake did, that the linguistic and logical features of Locke's argument not only articulated but also embodied the Lockean epistemology. It was an argument that relied on deduction and inference, couched in abstract language or images that reinforced the reader's tacit compliance with deism and material reality.[12] Blake therefore had to explode the techniques of this argument as much as he did its premises and conclusions. Believing he was up against a system that defended and embodied materialism and reason, Blake had to employ techniques that both frontally assaulted and undermined this system. His language and arguments are thus anti-rational, but not irrational; and when studying Blake's attacks on Lockean epistemology we must remember that by "reconstructing" a Blakean theory or view of mind we temporarily contradict, for the sake of later insights, Blake's very purpose. This temporary contradiction must not blind us to a central Blakean tenet: particular

ideas, not systems or general theories, nourish and intensify man's existence.[13]

The foundations of Locke's epistemology are his empiricism and his tacit admission that matter exists.[14] From Blake's point of view, the two are linked, since Locke's empiric finds the source of all his knowledge is his experience of nature. Locke himself makes this clear enough in the opening chapter of the second book in An Essay Concerning Human Understanding:

> Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas; --How comes it to be furnished ? .... Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge ? To this I answer, in one word, from EXPERIENCE. In that all our knowledge is founded; and from it ultimately derives itself. Our observation employed either, about external sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our minds perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understandings with all the materials of thinking.[15]

Most of Locke's second book is devoted to explaining the distinctions between observation "employed ... about external sensible objects" and observation employed "about the internal operations of our minds," the central distinction of which is Locke's dicussion of "simple" and "complex" ideas. Simple ideas are, according to Locke, ideas such as those produced by direct sensations; they are "uncompounded" (II, ii, 1) ideas that cannot be broken down into parts or distinguished into different ideas. Complex ideas are ideas that result when simple ideas are compared, repeated, or

united. Consequently, all knowledge ultimately depends on material nature, or what Locke calls "external sensible objects," for without direct perception of such objects there can be neither complex ideas nor any "internal operations" to reflect upon.[16] Locke's epistemology might therefore be seen as an elaborate defence of the tabula rasa theory; as Blake saw it, it was an epistemology of passivity, in which man's senses are merely "the first step and degree towards knowledge, and the inlet of all the materials of it" (II, ix, 15).

Blake began his attack on "natural perception" in the very first "illuminated books" he produced.[17] Though great leaps in logic appear in both the early tracts There is no Natural Religion and All Religions Are One, Blake's antipathy to doctrines of tabula rasa is clear. His first version of There is no Natural Religion is brief enough to be quoted entirely; it initially presents what Blake believes is the argument of Locke, but finishes with some rather unLockean conclusions:

> The Argument. Man has no notion of moral fitness but from Education. Naturally he is only a natural organ subject to Sense.
> I Man cannot naturally Perceive. but through his natural or bodily organs
> II Man by his reasoning power. can only compare & judge of what he has already perciev'd.
> III From a perception of only 3 senses or 3 elements none could deduce a fourth or fifth
> IV None could have other than natural or organic thoughts if he had none but organic perceptions
> V Mans desires are limited by his perceptions. none can desire what he has not perciev'd
> VI The desires & perceptions of man untaught by

> any thing but organs of sense, must be limited to objects of sense.
> Conclusion. If it were not for the Poetic or Prophetic character the Philosophic & Experimental would soon be at the ratio of all things, & stand still unable to do other than repeat the same dull round over again (1)

One can already see Blake's anti-rational language at work, rhetorically persuading rather than logically reasoning that Lockean philosophy dulls man's existence. The argument is a sort of enthymeme, structurally typical of Blake's concern for engaging the reader. Instead of using precise deductive techniques, Blake parodies deductive form and burdens the reader with tautologies that characterize the cyclical despair mentioned in the last clause and with negatives that demean the whole process of rational argument. The negatives, however, do not merely demean by association both the content and form of rational argument: they also provoke, by means of an implied absence, the intuition that there is more than the "only" and "none" echoing throughout the premises. There is an "other than." And Blake intensifies this intuition by the shifts in his middle four premises. As Blake transforms "reasoning power" into deduction into "thoughts" into "desires," provoking attention to these words as the only significantly new features in seemingly endless repetitions of one idea, the reader moves with him, not deducing but intuiting and perhaps even desiring some rhetorical resolution or climactic reference to the implied "more." The conclusion is therefore quickly accepted, the enthymeme willingly filled in: "the

Poetic or Prophetic character" fulfils Blake's rhetorically induced desire for resolution, and provides a thankful alternative to this tortured cycle of corporeal reasoning.

Just what the "Poetic or Prophetic character" mentioned in Blake's argument is does not become clear in these two early tracts, but it is featured again in All Religions Are One. First, though, Blake writes a second version of There is No Natural Religion, which begins with a positive counterpart to the negative opening premise of the already quoted tract:

> Mans perceptions are not bounded by organs of perception. he percieves more than sense (tho' ever so acute) can discover (2).

If he chooses to see "the Infinite in all things he sees God" (2). Indeed, in the act of seeing God, man becomes God; he breaks through and steps outside what Blake calls the "Ratio," not, as Blake will tell us in later works, into a material world, but into the realm of imagination, which is the "Eternal Body of Man ... God himself" (271). He therefore enjoys what is denied to the man of Locke's world, which was set in motion by a deistic God, demonstrable with "mathematical certainty."[18]

Besides derogating the Lockean theory of natural perception, Blake offers a number of direct, uncompromising, and unreserved criticisms of materialism. His tone and diction in A Vision of the Last Judgment typify the severity of his reaction to "corporeal" philosophy:

> Mental Things are Alone Real what is Calld Corporeal Nobody knows of its dwelling Place It is in Fallacy & its Existence an Imposture Where is the Existence Out of Mind or Thought Where is it but in the Mind of a Fool (555)

In this case, Blake's diction turns terminology against itself and its users: fools cannot deduce the fallacies of their own corporeal thinking because corporeality "exists" as a hidden imposture in the methods and categories of their logical reasoning. The outside is the inside projected, though the fool does not have the presence of mind to realize this. But what are these "Mental Things" that Blake offers instead of the corporeal world? Kathleen Raine's suggestion that Blake is like Berkeley in his "total adherence to the view that mind, or spirit, is the only substantial reality,"[19] or Northrop Frye's claim that for Blake "a man's imagination is his life"[20] scarcely introduces Blake's anti-Lockean view of mind. Yet to understand that view better, we must investigate the nature of his opposition to other Lockean tenets.

One of these tenets, as the title of Locke's first book of An Essay Concerning Human Understanding makes abundantly clear, is that "Neither Principles Nor Ideas are Innate." In fact, one of the chief reasons Locke developed his empirical position was to do away with the theory of innateness. Locke offers a variety of arguments against such a theory, but his arguments can be considered as facets of two main objections.[21] He argued, first, that it is doubtful whether or

not, as innatists claim, all men hold certain principles or ideas in common at birth or as adults; and, second, that even if we could not empirically disprove certain ideas or principles are universal, to attribute innateness to such hypothesized universals would be counterproductive to honest and rational inquiry, because it would provide an unnecessary and ultimately unexaminable solution to the problem of common ideas or principles. As far as Locke is concerned,

> When men have found some general propositions that could not be doubted of as soon as understood, it was, I know, a short and easy way to conclude them innate. This being once received, it eased the lazy from the pains of search, and stopped the inquiry of the doubtful concerning all that was once styled innate (I, iii, 25).

Locke finds what he considers a more plausible explanation for commonly held principles or ideas by extending the implications of his theory that perception is the "inlet of all the materials" of knowledge:

> The senses at first let in <u>particular</u> ideas, and furnish the yet empty cabinet, and the mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the memory, and names got to them. Afterwards, the mind proceeding further, abstracts them, and by degrees learns the use of general names. In this manner the mind comes to be furnished with ideas and language, the <u>materials</u> about which to exercise its discursive faculty (I, ii, 15).

In other words, universal ideas or principles --if they can be said to exist at all-- are not a birthright; according to Locke, any ideas that might be universal <u>among reasonable men</u>

would be so only because reason draws certain inevitable general ideas from the available body of particular facts or perceptions.

Blake's opposition to this feature of Locke's thought brings us a step closer to reconstructing Blake's view of mind. Once again his antipathy to empiricism is clear, and once again it is unrestrained:

> Knowledge of Ideal Beauty. is Not to be Acquired It is Born with us Innate Ideas. are in Every Man Born with him. they are truly Himself. The Man who says that we have no Innate Ideas must be a Fool & Knave. Having no Con-science or Innate Science (637).[22]

Though the annotation to Reynolds' Discourses was presumably written between 1798 and 1809,[23] this attitude towards innate ideas developed much earlier in Blake's life. In fact, the two early tracts previously quoted seem to foreshadow Blake's concern with innate ideas. The extra faculty which Blake therein postulated, and which, he said, allowed man to perceive "more than sense ... can discover," was apparently the "Poetic Genius"; this genius seems to harbour a knowledge beyond the ken of "natural or bodily organs":

> As None by travelling over known lands can find out the unknown. So from already acquired knowledge Man could not acquire more. therefore an Universal Poetic Genius exists (2).

Again Blake makes his point by parodying logical argument. The conjunctive adverb, which apparently begins a "proper" deductive conclusion, is merely a ruse, for this argument is

scarcely enthymemic, let alone syllogistic. There is not one missing premise here, but two at least, and even the single premise offered is supported only by a questionable analogue. Nevertheless, it is the evocative rather than the deductive quality of his argument that concerns Blake. Discovery of the missing premise that man knows more than he acquires may prove the argument invalid, but for the reader who accepts this premise such discovery also proves, in a sense, the argument true: Blake's conclusion merely names what such a reader already intuits. Intuition thus awakes at the expense of deductive reasoning, and the imaginative reader senses that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in corporeal philosophy and syllogistic logic.

This enthymemic fourth "principle" of All Religions Are One certainly suggests that Blake believes the Poetic Genius leads men to innate ideas. In his study of Blake's Neoplatonism, George Mills Harper confirms this connection:

> Blake's theory of Innate Ideas is based upon his faith in vision, in the power of the Divine Imagination [or the Poetic Genius] to apprehend truth immediately and directly. His Romantic doctrine of Imagination ... is obviously directed at the Lockean concept of knowledge generally accepted by the eighteenth century.[24]

Harper also claims that this belief in innate ideas was fundamental to Blake's entire way of thinking. We must be careful, however, to appreciate some of the idiosyncracies in Blake's interpretation of innate ideas. As Harper explains, Blake's outlook is more Neoplatonic than Platonic: he considers

"ideal forms" to exist not as objective truths outside of any one mind, but as mental entities existent when the mind perceives them.[25] Furthermore, Blake's devotion to individualism compelled him to qualify even this mentalistic interpretation of innate ideas as perfect mental forms. Since no two men see the same way, since, as Blake says in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, "One Law for the Lion & Ox is Oppression" (43), the visionary act of perceiving truth as the perfect form of innate ideas is never the same for two men. Perfect forms may exist in the collective imagination of all men, but these can never be perceived, even in the act of pure imagination, from the angle of individual vision, so the perfect forms perceived always seem to be different. Indeed, from the perspectives of two different men the perfect forms seen in the imagination are different; but if all perspectives could somehow be simultaneously considered, one perfect form would be sensed. For Blake, this simultaneous act would be the Last Judgment, a concept that need not be pursued here. It is important to understand, though, that Blake's visionary blacksmith, Los, works towards this Last Judgment by forging the perspectives of imaginative men into art. He is called a "Vehicular Form" (200) both because he vehicularizes or moves single men by arousing their faculties to act and because he moves among men, never allowing one man's perspective to impede the quest of all men for collective perception of imaginative form. He is therefore the antidote to "Single vision & Newtons sleep" (693), which is also the vision of

Locke.

Of all Locke's theories, the doctrine of abstract and general ideas seemed to upset Blake most. It has also upset scholars of Locke's work: the inconsistent and uncertain employment of the word "idea" in the Essay clouds Locke's intended definition of "abstraction," and thus leaves open to interpretation a crucial component of Locke's epistemology.[26] Nevertheless, the popular contemporary interpretation of "abstraction" --the one that Berkeley and Blake seemed to accept[27]-- can be briefly summarized. According to Locke, though the world is composed only of particular objects, for the benefit of both thought and communication men tend to "generalize" those particulars. That is, they "abstract" from all similar particulars the features they hold in common, and then think and speak of the abstract generalization. Just how the mind accomplishes this abstraction is not made clear in the Essay, but to Berkeley, for instance,

> Locke appears to have been saying that we start with a number of particular images derived from our direct perceptions of 'external sensible objects' each, for example, of a different individual man of our acquaintance, and end with something which is still an image but is now a ghostly general image, characterized not by any of the features that are peculiar to any of the individual men but only by all those that all men share.[28]

Accordingly, the process of abstraction, which Locke considered such an efficient means of thinking and communicating, results in what Blake believed were "shadowy memories" of the real thing, or what are called "'spectres' in Blake's symbol-

ism."[29] The worst spectre is the "Selfhood" of the man who generalizes. When any man thinks and speaks in abstract generalizations, he himself becomes an abstract generalization and not an individual. Blake would say he "ceases to exist" (178).

Blake's feelings about "abstraction" and "generalization" are perhaps the most famous of his antipathies for Lockean thought. In his annotations to Reynolds' Discourses, a text that does, in fact, seem remarkably dependent on Lockean epistemology,[30] Blake relentlessly attacks any signs of faith in Locke's theory of generalization. These are but a few of his more colorful comments:

> To Generalize is to be an Idiot To Particularize is the Alone Distinction of Merit --General Knowledges are those Knowledges that Idiots possess(630)
>
> What is General Nature is there Such a Thing what is General Knowledge is there such a Thing Strictly speaking All Knowledge is Particular (637)
>
> Distinct General Form Cannot Exist Distinctness is Particular Not General (638)
>
> Generalizing in Every thing the Man would soon be a Fool but a Cunning Fool (638)
>
> All Forms are Perfect in the Poets Mind. but these are not Abstracted nor Compounded from Nature but are from Imagination (637)

The last remark clarifies Blake's earlier statements about innate ideas. Rather than abstract generalizations, the "perfect forms" in the poet's mind are particulars, and Imagination determines the character and quality of them when perceived. When the particular percept is imaginatively realized

or activated, it is known as truth from the angle of the imaginer. In Blake's own words, "Knowledge is not by deduction but Immediate by Perception or Sense at Once" (653), and what that knowledge is depends on the imagination of the perceiver. The unimaginative man sees one way:

> To the eyes of a Miser a Guinea is more Beautiful than the Sun & a bag worn with the use of Money has more beautiful proportions than a Vine filled with Grapes (677)

But Blake sees quite differently:

> What it will be Questiond When the Sun rises do you not see a round Disk of fire somewhat like a Guinea O no no I see an Innumerable company of the Heavenly Host crying Holy Holy Holy is the Lord God Almighty I question not my Corporeal or Vegetative Eye any more than I would Question a Window concerning a Sight I look thro it & not with it (555).

This process of seeing with the imagination through the senses is, Blake believes, the process of real vision. Though the forms the "poetic genius" thus sees are ideal, they are not "generalized" or "abstracted" in any way:

> The Prophets describe what they saw in Vision as real and existing men whom they saw with their imagination and immortal organs; the Apostles the same; the clearer the organ the more distinct the object. A Spirit and Vision are not, as the modern philosophy supposes, a cloudy vapour or a nothing: they are organized and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce. He who does not imagine in stronger and better light than his perishing mortal eye can see does not imagine at all (532)

This is why Blake complains so much about "the sickly daubs

of Titian or Rubens" (536), and why he so often advocates the sharp and wirey "bounding line" (540) and "Minute Neatness of Execution" (636); all vision, he believes, is precisely discriminated: it must therefore be minutely articulated if it is to become visionary art. To accomplish this, the artist will certainly have to practise his technique, for "Mechanical Excellence is the Only Vehicle of Genius" (632), but it must never be forgotten that without Imagination, corporeal technique is sterile.[31]

The characteristics of Blake's own poetic techniques can be better understood in the light of his reaction to Locke's theory of language, which is worth examining at some length. It is a theory that deliberately bolsters the author's theory of abstract ideas. In fact, Locke devoted the entire third part of his four part Essay to language because, as he says at the conclusion of Book Two, he found that

> there is so close a connexion between ideas and WORDS, and our abstract ideas and general words have so constant a relation one to another, that it is impossible to speak clearly and distinctly of our knowledge, which all consists in propositions, without considering, first, the nature, use, and signification of Language (II,xxxiii,19).

"Of Words" then elaborates on this connection between abstract ideas and general words. After arguing that it is both impractical and impossible that "every particular thing should have a distinct peculiar name" (III,iii,2), Locke explains the origin of general words with a semantic theory that supports his theory of general ideas:

> Words become general by being made the signs of general ideas: and ideas become general, by separating from them the circumstances of time and place, and any other ideas that may determine them to this or than particular existence (III, iii,6).

General ideas, in other words, abstract from the particulars of nature:

> It is plain ... that general and universal belong not to the real existence of things; but are inventions and creatures of the understanding, made by it for its own use, and concern only signs, whether words or ideas. Words are general ... when used for signs of general ideas, and so are applicable indifferently to many particular things (III,iii,11).

Locke places one further condition on the nature of general words and ideas. All words, he says, "in their primary or immediate signification, stand for nothing but the ideas in the mind of him that uses them (III,ii,2). Thus, rather than posit a direct connection between word and thing, or between word and "idea" in any public or generally accessible sense, Locke posits a direct connection between word and private idea. What the Lockean man does, then, is this: he privately perceives particulars, privately abstracts from these particulars to arrive at a general idea capable of representing each and every particular of a given class or group, then employs a publicly accepted word to designate his private generalization.

Men choose "publicly accepted" words because, as far as Locke is concerned, the chief purpose of language is communi-

cation, and "the chief end of language in communication ... is ... to be understood" (III,ix,4). As he says in chapter two of Book Three, though

> ... every man has so inviolable a liberty to make words stand for what ideas he pleases .... common use, by a tacit consent, appropriates certain sounds to certain ideas in all languages, which so far limits the signification of that sound, that unless a man applies it to the same idea, he does not speak properly (III,ii,8).

One might wonder, however, how the speaker is to know if he applies a word to the "same idea" as that of common use, since his "idea" is private. Indeed, one might well wonder what this same idea is. It can, according to Locke's theories, be only one of two things: an idea in the mind of a perfect speaker, or an idea that exists in no particular mind but only in the public mind --that is, as the impalpable abstract generalization of a general idea. The former possibility Locke himself refutes: nobody, he claims, has "an authority to establish the precise signification of words, nor determine to what ideas any one shall annex them" (III, ix,8). Yet the latter possibility offers little solace to any individual, since, by definition, the disembodied perfect signification of a general word can never be thought, at least not knowingly by any user of language. Thus, though Locke insists the chief purpose of language is communication, his own epistemology ultimately, and perhaps inadvertently, suggests that ideas are imperfectly communicable, if communicable at all.

Despite the fact that ideas are at best imperfectly communicable, Locke stresses the need for learning and remembering the most precise uses of words. In his chapter on the "remedies" for the abuses of words, Locke claims that if only men would avoid using words without precise signification and study "those who in their writings and discourses appear to have had the clearest notions" (III,xi,11), communication would be much improved. This theory, which suggests that men recollect and analyze both their own and other men's uses of words, places some strain on memory, but Locke freely admits "Memory .... is of so great moment, that, where it is wanting, all the rest of our faculties are in a great measure useless" (II,x,8). Language and memory do seem to be inextricably linked in Locke's epistemology; next to communication, the most crucial purpose of language is mnemonic. As Locke says, men use words "to record their own thoughts, for the assistance of their own memory" (III,ii,2). Since Locke places such stress on learning, we can assume this mnemonic aspect of language applies to all men as it does to each man. Writing, our most deliberate form of language, thus becomes "the great conduit, whereby men convey their discoveries, reasonings, and knowledge, from one to another" (III,xi,5).

Berkeley opposed Locke's view of language because, as he claimed,

> ... the communicating of ideas marked by words is not the chief and only end of language .... There are other ends, as the raising of some passion, the exciting to or deterring from an action, the

> putting the mind in some particular disposition; to which the former is in many cases barely subservient, and sometimes entirely omitted.[32]

Though he himself made no explicit concerted effort to point out the weaknesses of Locke's theory, Blake would have agreed with these objections for several reasons. In fact, Blake would have considered all of these objections to be a single objection, and would have rejected the "conduit" theory of language altogether. According to Blake, language does not pass on information; it raises men to and makes them realize truth. Verbal and/or visual art excites men to see imaginatively, arouses them to renew the "Imaginative Image" by "the seed of Contemplative Thought" (545).

As Locke would have it, "all the artificial and figurative application of words eloquence has invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgement" (III,x,34). Blake did not believe passion impedes knowledge; rather, passion rises with understanding:

> Men are admitted into Heaven not because they have curbed & governd their Passions or have No Passions but because they have Cultivated their Understandings. The treasures of Heaven are not Negations of Passion but Realities of Intellect from which all the Passions Emanate Uncurbed in their Eternal Glory (554).

The writer's attempt to provoke passion is thus simultaneously an attempt to make readers "cultivate their understandings." The reader should, that is, with suitable provocation, unearth what is already, albeit unconsciously, his own, not receive a

foreign idea from the writer. Blake believed suitable provocation involved indirection:

> That which can be made Explicit to the Idiot is not worth my care. The wisest of the Ancients considerd what is not too Explicit as the fittest for Instruction because it rouzes the faculties to act (676).

"All the art of rhetoric" is not, as Locke claims it to be, a "powerful instrument of error and deceit ... the art of fallacy" (III,x,34), but is rather the instrument of raising men into the imaginative perception of truth. In any case, Blake realized that even the Lockean speaker employs rhetoric. This is why Blake says,

> Locke's Opinions of Words & their Fallaciousness are Artful Opinions & Fallacious also (648)

To him, Locke's own Essay was one of the "perfect cheats" (III, x,34) Locke condemns. Using language to condemn rhetoric required considerable rhetorical skill.

Blake attributes Locke's attack on rhetoric to a misguided faith in reason, memory, and learning. "Let the Philosopher always be the servant and scholar of inspiration," says Blake in A Descriptive Catalogue, "and all will be happy" (528). Any philosopher who hopes to edify men "by placing Learning above Inspiration" can only "shut the doors of mind and thought" (537). But the philosopher Locke was not the only writer who was thus misled. When he was middle-aged, Blake came to believe that the entire Greek culture --excluding

Homer, who was apparently not Greek at all[33]-- misunderstood the true nature of art:

> The Greek Muses are daughters of Mnemosyne, or Memory, and not of Inspiration or Imagination, therefore not authors of ... sublime conceptions (522)

This worship of memory is, Blake thinks, the foundation of "Fable or Allegory ... a totally distinct & inferior kind of Poetry" from "The Hebrew Bible & the Gospel of Jesus," which are both "Eternal Vision or Imagination of All that Exists" (544). On another occasion, in the short prose piece "On Virgil," Blake says "Grecian is Mathematic Form Gothic is Living Form Mathematic Form is Eternal in the Reasoning Memory. Living Form is Eternal Existence" (267). We can assume that Blake always wanted his poetry to be like the Gospel or the Gothic form. "The Eternal Body of Man is The IMAGINATION .... It manifests itself in his Works of Art" (271): "God is not a Mathematical Diagram" (653).

One can fully appreciate Blake's own anti-Lockean view of art and language only if one recognizes just how thoroughly Blake disliked Locke's view of memory. Memory, Blake feels, actually impedes the activity of imagination, which is "Eternal Vision" (544), "the greatest of all blessings" (671), "the Real Man" (653), "Human Existence itself" (131). To recall the past or listen to "immortal demons of futurity" (61) is to enter a "void" (perhaps the void of Locke's white paper mind without characters), to dwell, like those who

believe in distant and abstract Gods, "in an allegorical abode where existence hath never come" (61). Mental existence is the only existence for Blake, and mental existence is characterized by the quality of one's present perceptions. If mental existence is imaginative, we will dwell in "the real and eternal world" (229), constantly and actively seeing through the eye; if we rely on our memories, we will scarcely exist at all. This is one reason why so many of Blake's images suggest continual motion: "visionary forms dramatic," "chariot of fire," "wheels within wheels," "the mental traveller." Such dynamic images remind us that the mind must be neither passive nor static. Whether by "the Immediate Inspiration of God" or by "the Advice of a Friend" (552), we must all activate imagination in ourselves,

> To cast off the rotten rags of Memory ...
> To cast off Bacon, Locke, & Newton from Albions covering
> To take off his filthy garments, & clothe him with Imagination (141).

As far as Blake is concerned, "Imagination has nothing to do with Memory" (655).

This emphasis on continuous imaginative activity has important implications for Blake's view of language. Since he devalues empirical judgements, memory, and the conduit theory of language, Blake also discards the idea that any text or painting contains a precise or single meaning that an audience should or can objectively discover. Truth can only be realized in the mind of the imaginative beholder: the task of the

reader, therefore, is not to learn the meaning of the text by estimating and remembering the proper significance of each word, but to realize truth by seeing what words mean to the reader himself. No one can say what the written word "means." When a reader tries to explicate a text by employing the standards of other readers or by bowing to some generally accepted critical method, his own powers of imagination will be weakened. To Blake, reading as someone else would have you read is "like walking in another man's style, or speaking or looking in another man's style and manner, unappropriate and repugnant to your own individual character" (538).[34]

This view may seem to promote a dangerously liberal treatment of literature, but Blake was not one to pamper institutions or cherish tradition for its own sake. "You must," he said, "leave Fathers & Mothers & Houses & Lands if they stand in the way of Art" (272), for there is "no other Christianity and no other Gospel than the liberty both of body & mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination" (229). The alternative to such imaginative freedom is tyranny. When someone insists that he understands the true meaning of words, he enters and drives others into what Blake calls a Druidical Age, like the one "which began to turn allegoric and mental signification into corporeal command, whereby human sacrifice would have depopulated the earth" (533). "Greek Philosophy ... is a remnant of Druidism" (198). Like Locke, it undervalues rhetoric and claims "that Poets & Prophets do not know

or Understand what they write" (544).

This claim is, according to Blake, "a most Pernicious Falsehood" (544). Though the true artist does not determine meaning for his audience, he does provoke and guide audience response with great care and "minute articulation":

> Ideas cannot be Given but in their minutely Appropriate Words nor Can a Design be made without its minutely Appropriate Execution (565)

When the artist has done this, we can ask no more of him. It is we who must then imaginatively appropriate his words:

> If the Spectator could Enter into these Images in his Imagination approaching them on the Fiery Chariot of his Contemplative Thought if he could Enter into Noahs Rainbow or into his bosom or could make a Friend & Companion of one of these Images of Wonder which always intreats him to leave mortal things as he must know then he would he arise from his Grave (550)

Words and images are not, as Locke thinks them, conduits through which we pass ideas across time and space; to Blake they are the medium through and in which we enter "Eternity" by activating imagination.

The truths Blake's poetry guides us to will of course be our own, but under no circumstances does he wish us to suffer the vision of Locke. This is not only the vision of abstraction, generalization, and corporeal dependence; it is the mechanistic vision of a space and time firmly grounded in Newtonian physics. "Newton believed in a space composed of points, and a time composed of instants, which had existence

independent of the bodies and events that occupied them."[35] When such a mechanistic view of the physical universe was translated into Locke's epistemology of empiricism, the results, Blake believed, were doubly devastating. On one level, the results degrade the measurements of human perception: when science declares that time and space can be objectively measured by standard units, the common man places little stock in what his eye sees or heart feels. Imagination, Blake would say, is usurped by the clock and the yardstick: "Bring out number weight & measure in a year of dearth" (35). On another, and deeper level, this submission to scientific standards and gradual subversion of unique human perceptions leads the mind to adopt the structure of its new role model; in Blake's words, we become what we behold. In Locke's philosophy Newton's indistinguishable, indestructible units become the measure of thought itself: like Newton's deistic universe of atoms and moments, Locke's mind hums with the mechanical activity of ideas that move by causal association once they have been set in motion by an unknown power. (Unknown, that is, in Blake's view, because "nobody knows" of the dwelling place of the corporeal.) It is as if, to borrow Blake's early remarks from <u>There is No Natural Religion</u>, the mind without "the Poetic or Prophetic character ... stands still unable to do other than repeat the same dull round again" (1).

In passages that sound as if he were describing the cosmic movement of discrete corpuscles, Locke reveals the

impact of mechanistic physics on his own epistemology. Ideas, set in motion, determine further ideas; like Sterne's unfortunate Tristram, man finds himself the passive victim of corporeal percepts and random association:

> It is evident to any one who will but observe what passes in his own mind, that there is a train of ideas which constantly succeed one another in his understanding, as long as he is awake. Reflection on these appearances of several ideas one after another in our minds, is that which furnishes us with the idea of succession: and the distance between any parts of that succession, or between the appearance of any two ideas in our minds, is that we call duration. (II,xiv,3).

The only occasions man does not have the idea of duration are when he dreams, because in sleep ideas sometimes seem not to succeed one another, and when he perceives an "exceeding quick" motion in "an instant ... which takes up the time of only one idea in our minds, without the succession of another" (II,xiv, 10). Otherwise, Locke claims, no man "can keep one unvaried single idea in his mind, without any other, for any considerable time together" (II,xiv,13). It is by mathematical extension of small measures such as instants that man arrives at his idea of both infinity and eternity. To think of infinite space, man multiplies his idea of "any stated length of space, as a foot," until he has "enlarged his idea as he pleases ... is not one jot nearer the end of such addition ... and hence takes the idea of infinite space" (II,xvii,3). Similarly, by observing succeeding ideas, measuring their duration, and repeating "those measures of time," men "can come

to imagine duration, where nothing does really endure or exist"; then, by adding "ideas of an length of time ... one to another, without ever coming to the end of such addition, any nearer ... to the end of number," men "come by the idea of eternity, as the future eternal duration of ... souls, as well as the eternity of that infinite Being which must necessarily have always existed" (II,xiv,31). By such multiplicaations of ideas derived from corporeality, does man infer the greatness of an infinite and eternal God: He is "an object too large and mighty to be surveyed" (II,xvii,21) by finite beings.

It is easy enough to see why such theories of mind and of time and space might upset Blake. They seem to encourage thoughts of that which cannot be perceived, to usurp imaginative vision of time and space and enthrone corporeal mathematics. For Blake, "the final test of any philosophy is the kind of human being it produces,"[36] and Lockean philosophy only produces men who feel like "worms of sixty winters" (61). "What seems to Be: Is: To those to whom/It seems to Be, & is productive of the most dreadful/Consequences to those to whom it seems to Be" (177). Accordingly, when a man believes Locke's Essay,

> The Visions of Eternity, by reason of narrowed perceptions,
> ... become Weak Visions of Time & Space, fix'd into furrows of death (196)

The man who accepts Locke's vision is, Blake thinks, the worm

of sixty winters: he passes his time on this earth with tunnel vision, old and wrinkled beyond his years.

Blake offers a view of time with more human proportions. Imagination can hold duration at bay by entering "Eternity," which is not, in Blake's vocabulary, an endless succession of same moments but is the timeless act of perceiving "through the eye"; similarly, imagination can defy abstractions such as endless "extension" of space by entering Blake's own version of infinity: any space or percept, no matter how small, which has been "opened" by the "altering eye."[37] This is why, to quote a famous phrase from "Auguries of Innocence," those who are imaginative can

> ... see a World in a Grain of Sand
> And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
> Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
> And Eternity in an hour (484)

Each particular, if seen through the eye with the active imagination, contains all space and time. And when the poet enters Eternity, he does not meet corporeal death, but imaginative life, here and now, measured not by its duration but by its intensity:

> Every Time less than a pulsation of the artery
> Is Equal in its period & value to Six Thousand Years
> For in this Period the Poets Work is Done: And all the Great
> Events of Time start forth & are conceived in such a Period
> Within a Moment: a Pulsation of the Artery (126).

The pulsation is equal to six thousand years because that

figure represents, in Blake's mythology, the years passed since man's fall, and in moments of creative conception poets can envision and thus bring back to life all events of history. In fact, at the height of his imaginative activity, the artist is capable of "Creating Space, Creating Time according to the wonders Divine/Of Human Imagination" (255). At such times man enters Eternity.

Blake's idea of Eternity is fundamental to his entire outlook, and a primary source of his poetic themes and symbols. The idea is significantly linked to Blake's interpretation of the fall and to his version of the "Giant Man" myth. Albion, as he is named in Blake's poems, is all men. Once the "Eternal Man," Albion became the "Fallen Man" when the elements of his psyche disengaged themselves and became unbalanced. The fall resulted in men, whose tortured psyches reflect the Giant Man's fallen disintegration, and in the "Vegetable World," the world we suppose to be real because our senses seem to touch, taste, smell, hear, and see it. The fall, therefore, is in Blake's thought also the creation, not of all things, but of the world we ordinarily know, of men as we know them, and of the senses that often delude us into thinking the corporeal world is real. The real world, Blake's eternity of perfect ideas and of integrated man, existed before the fall, and still can exist:

> Many suppose that before the Creation All was Solitude & Chaos This is the most pernicious Idea that can enter the Mind as it takes away all sublimity from the Bible & Limits All Existence to Creation & to Chaos To the Time &

> Space fixed by the Corporeal Vegetative Eye & leaves the Man who entertains such an Idea the habitation of Unbelieving Demons Eternity Exists and All things in Eternity Independent of Creation which was an act of Mercy (552-553)

One might well wonder why Blake, who so harshly condemns the illusory corporeal world, considers the creation "an act of Mercy." The answer is easy enough: in his view, things might have been worse. Eternal Man could have fallen into a bottomless pit of psychic confusion; instead, his fall was arrested by the creation of senses and sense percepts. Even for Blake, this "Vegetable World" is better than no world at all.

Nevertheless, Blake criticizes those who erroneously embrace either the Vegetable World or Lockean abstraction, for as far as he is concerned, such men, as microcosms of the Giant Man, are reenacting the fall. On the other hand, when any individual embraces truth, he enters Eternity:

> All Life consists of these Two Throwing off Error ... & receiving Truth ... Continually .... No man can Embrace True Art till he has Explored & Cast out False Art such is the Nature of Mortal Things .... whenever any Individual Rejects Error & Embraces Truth a Last Judgment passes upon that Individual (551)

The acts of embracing truth and casting out error are simultaneous, for it is only in the very moment of recognizing errors or falsehoods that we realize truths:

> Error is Created Truth is Eternal Error or Creation will be Burnt Up & then & not till then Truth or Eternity will appear. It is Burnt up the Moment Men cease to behold it (555)

Here, then, is a paradox in Blake's vision of art and imagination. The artist should embrace and offer truths, so that all men may recover Eternity, so that Albion may recover his balance and awake; yet creation, Blake tells us, is "Error." The poet or painter who wants to promote truth or articulate vision must do so within this world of "Generation," and so must create what should be eternal. The creation is the fall.

It is a paradox that brings us to the heart of Blake's unorthodox Christian vision. According to Blake, the artist sacrifices himself so that men might see; though he might live in the "Eternal Now" (581), he gives his vision to art so that his audience can "look through a Window into Eden" (300). In doing so he sacrifices his "Self," but then, "Execution is the Chariot of Genius" (632): only as he executes vision in and by word and line can the poet/painter provide the vehicle for his own and his viewers' reentry into Eternity. The tomb of Selfhood thus becomes the womb of Imagination, and like the aging man who appears in so many of Blake's designs --in "The Gates of Paradise," in the illustrations for Blair's The Grave, in America: A Prophecy[38] --we the audience must enter this tomb/womb if we hope to become eternally young again.

The old man who enters "Death's Door" is a graphic symbol for the mind whose imagination is waning. We find him throughout Blake's work: at his worst, he is the Urizenic, bespectacled figure of "aged Ignorance" (262), clipping the wings of the youth reaching for "eternity's sunrise" (461).

The doctrines such a man embraces have been discussed in this chapter: his empiricism, his materialism, his rejection of innate ideas, his theories of natural perception and abstraction, his mechanistic views of memory and the perception of time and space, his craving for a language of precise denotation-- all these opinions seem to draw him away from vivid, visionary perception in the "Eternal Now." Blake's opposing viewpoint, developed in the hope of resurrecting imaginative life, has also been considered in this chapter. It suggests that men should envision innate truths by simultaneously recognizing the errors of Urizenic or Lockean sight and realizing particulars in an act of imaginative vision. Just how particulars will be imaginatively envisioned Blake does not say; if readers do not receive "Immediate Inspiration of God," the poet/painter can only offer friendly advice in "minutely appropriate words" that arouse the faculties to act. This chapter has considered what that advice is: it remains to be seen how, as art, such advice activates the imaginative life it recommends.

CHAPTER THREE

The Songs and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

Abstracted from the body of his verbal/visual work, Blake's anti-Lockean view of mind may seem fragmentary and, when measured by the standards of traditional epistemologies, unsystematic. But this is just how Blake would have it: he did not wish to construct any system of thought except insofar as a system might provide him with a means for free intellectual activity. For want of a better word, we might call Blake's work an "anti-system."[1] Like Los, who "strives with Systems to deliver Individuals from those Systems" (153), Blake wanted to revive our perception of the uniqueness of each particular, and to do so he had to develop an anti-system that, rather than absorb or succeed all other systems, could beneficially defy, and at the same time feed off, other systems. The quintessential purpose of this anti-system is to redeem human beings, for "to deliver Individuals" is to deliver from systems both particulars and the men who perceive particulars. We become what we behold; when we behold the uniqueness of particulars, we become the unique men we truly are.

In his own time, Blake believed Locke's epistemological systematizing had infiltrated even the practice of art. Painters employed that "infernal machine, called Chiaro Oscuro"

(537); engravers discussed "absurd Nonsense about dots & Lozenges" (571); poets relied on the "Monotonous Sing Song Sing Song" (570) of rhymed couplets. All such techniques were to Blake's way of thinking signs that English art had deteriorated into "weak imitation, plagiarism, and bungling" (540), that, in their "fatal Slumber," Englishmen had come to believe the "artfully propagated pretence that a Translation or a Copy of any kind can be as honourable to a Nation as an Original" (565). Blake saw it as his artistic duty to arouse his countrymen from this slumber. Like Los, he wanted

> To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the Immortal Eyes
> Of Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought: into Eternity
> Ever expanding in the Bosom of God. the Human Imagination (146).

As has been shown, this ambitious, self-imposed task involves among other things retrieving the attention of his contemporaries from Lockean modes of thought, encouraging them to perceive imaginatively, uniquely, particularly. To accomplish this task Blake could not merely ignore the Lockean system or its systematic counterparts in the arts of the day; he had to show his readers the errors of their ways so that they could release themselves in a realization of truth. His work thus became a means for both showing and breaking down old forms, old systems, and misbegotten "plagiarisms" that habituated perception. At its best, Blake hoped, his work would be "Living Form" (267); though it would expose what is

temporal and systematic and therefore false, it would also, because it is "always Novel or New in all its Operations"(643), eternally provoke imaginative life and perception of truth.

As his work matures, Blake's verbal attempts to impede Lockean and simultaneously activate anti-Lockean thinking occur on three levels. The most striking means of arousing readers are Blake's use of poetic structures and figurative language. These both tend to defamiliarize one's conventional sense of language and literature so much that they "arouse the faculties to act." Equally important, if less prominent and less extensive in Blake's early poetry, is Blake's other means of activating reader imagination: by developing certain themes in his poetry, Blake draws attention to the very acts of perceiving and reading, and thereby provokes awareness that all perception --and for Blake reading is a form of perception-- is indeed active, that what is before the reader depends upon the reader himself. According to Blake, "the tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the Eyes of others only a Green thing that stands in the way" (677). Lest the reader carelessly reject his poetry because of its demanding structures, Blake thematically encourages him to interpret this poetry imaginatively. In his final poems, as these themes of reading overlap or blend with other thematic treatments of thought and perception, readers learn the devastating consequences of passive perception, of seeing trees and poems as things that stand in the way:

> ... What Seems to Be: Is: To those to whom
> It seems to Be, & is productive of the most
> dreadful
> Consequences to those to whom it seems to Be (177).

The words may be those of Blake's final illuminated poem, but the belief is one which motivated him throughout his career. Sensing that his readers believed in a fatal philosophical system, he began at a very young age to write poetry that could revitalize them by delivering them from that system.

Even the Poetical Sketches, said to be written by Blake between the ages of twelve and twenty, reveals a vital poet seeking to transcend rather than merely imitate traditional verse forms. Though many of the lyrics in this collection seem conventional, others, according to Stanley Gardner, provoke "startling associations of ideas" or induce "an uncomfortable recognition on the part of the reader."[2] Taken as a whole, the poems represent an ambitious attempt to revive the ancient muse who, as the young poet saw it, had fallen into despondency:

> How have you left the antient love
> That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
> The languid strings do scarcely move!
> The sound is forc'd, the notes are few! (409)

There are, in fact, a few poems in the Poetical Sketches that indicate the young poet's distaste for the values and conventions of his contemporaries; however, this dissatisfaction, even though encouraged by sufficient ambition, was not yet supported by poetic techniques. Though the poems are

impressive efforts from such a young man, they remain, in many ways, juvenalia. Their youthful excellence depends mainly on subtle variations of conventional rhyme, metre, and imagery, and they can scarcely be interpreted as a radical new approach to poetic form.[3]

A new approach emerged, however, with The Book of Los, Blake's first illuminated poetic work, and this approach soon blossomed into The Songs of Innocence and of Experience.[4] The former poem seems innovative primarily because of its illuminated form, but in the latter work the illuminated page, in itself a departure from the conventions of lyric poetry,[5] is wedded to a formal approach that heightens reader awareness of perspective, context, and what might be called "tensive interaction." This last characteristic is so called because the most unusual feature of the Songs is its ability to intensify one's reading of any poem by the verbal and visual reverberations of other poems; the "songs" seem to interact even though each one exhibits formal unity, and therefore a certain tension between particular poems and between a particular poem and the larger general context of the Songs arises in the reader's mind. Brian Wilkie summarizes the formal properties of this interaction in the Songs briefly but precisely:

> The two sets of lyrics make up an integral work, and therefore we can draw inferences from certain poems in reading others --not just with the obviously contrasted ones but with all the poems that are relevant to one another in subject or method. The repetition of images and of themes (of

> maternity and paternity, for example), the contrasted pairings, the groupings such as that which puts three flower poems on the same plate, the persistency of certain iconographical motifs in the pictures, and other evidence indicates that the Songs are interdependent, in a complex way.[6]

The relative importance placed on each of these interactive features depends on the reader interpreting Blake's Songs. Robert Gleckner, the critical pioneer and still one of the major authorities of the "point of view" perspective of Blake's poems, goes so far as to suggest that

> the relationship of each unit to the series as a whole might be stated as a kind of progression: from the states of innocence and experience to the Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience, to each individual song within the series, to the symbols within each song, to the words that give the symbols their existence. Conceivably, ignorance of or indifference to one word prohibits the imaginative perception and understanding of the whole structure.[7]

If Gleckner's interpretation seems to demand acute linguistic attentiveness from the reader, it is an interpretation no more demanding than others that insist on our visual attentiveness. Eben Bass, for example, insists that we attend to relationships between such minute visual phenomena as diagonals and curves in the sometimes congested borders of the Songs.[8] He is joined in this judgement by, among others, David Erdman and W.J.T. Mitchell,[9] both of whom have spent considerable energy identifying and contemplating Blake's "minute particulars." Furthermore, Blake's new art form exhibits tensive interaction not only between word and word, and between design

and design, but also between word and design. In fact, this is Blake's most prominent and innovative method of exciting reader attention and mental activity. Critical opinion is virtually unanimous in seeing Blake's Songs, as Mitchell does, as "an energetic rivalry, a dialogue or dialectic between vigorously independent modes of expression."[10]

It would seem, then, that so many varieties of "tensive interaction" might verify Wilkie's claim that "The Songs of Innocence and of Experience is one of the most kaleidoscopic works in world literature."[11] In many ways, the collection operates on the reader's attention as no collection of lyric poems before it had been able to. It is clear, too, upon a first reading of the collection, that all this stimulation supports an outlook so critical that it might be considered revolutionary. There is certainly no singling out of John Locke at this point in Blake's career: to borrow a title from Jean Hagstrum, Blake simply "rejects the Enlightenment" outright. In reading the Songs we find, for instance, the specific social criticism displayed in "The Chimney Sweeper" and "The Little Black Boy," and the wide-ranging social criticism of "London"; the scornful critiques of the church in "Holy Thursday" and "The Garden of Love," and the expansive criticism of all organized religion implied by "The Angel"; the distaste for human jealousy and greed exhibited by "My Pretty Rose Tree" and "A Poison Tree," and the scornful caricature of a model moral man implied by the poem "The Human Abstract." Nor is this consistent thematic criticism the only evidence

of Blake's radical response to contemporary values. Formally, as well as thematically, the Songs were intended to appeal to an audience of the same popular literature whose values Blake utterly rejected; as several scholars have pointed out, Blake's Songs often mock Dr. Isaac Watts' Divine and Moral Songs for Children.[12]

Even in his illustrations Blake rejects contemporary conventions and current norms. As Kathleen Raine suggests,

> Already in Songs of Innocence Blake's figures have attained freedom from the gravitational forces which constrain natural objects: the characteristic, thereafter, of all his depictions of the human form, a quality essentially Blakean, and shared by none of his contemporaries.[13]

Raine's accurate description should not, however, be seen as evidence that, as Robert Rosenblum puts it, Blake's style was one of "linear abstraction." Though the illustrations show ethereal qualities, they are "exuberantly and sensuously alive, not bloodless, cold, or static."[14] Indeed, when Blake compared his illuminated manuscript to the bland, black and white printed books that were --and still are-- the norm, he must have been very pleased. He would likely have regarded his illuminated writing as a means of "improving sensual enjoyment and of frustrating Urizen, under whose reign the senses had become shrunken and useless."[15] When the methods of illuminated writing were combined with such radical criticism of contemporary values and with the startling techniques of tensive interaction, the result must have aroused, and perhaps even perplexed, contemporary readers.

Such perplexity was precisely what Blake wanted to provoke. The freed human forms, the sensuous illuminated page, the social, psychological, and philosophical criticism, the interdependence of word and design, the startling associations between series, songs, symbols, words --all of these characteristics force readers to reassess their standards, if not think in new ways. Though at this stage of his career Blake does not explicitly direct his criticisms at Locke, both the thematic concerns and the visual and verbal techniques of the Songs of Innocence and of Experience consistently criticize the psychological, social, philosophical, and religious standards of the late eighteenth-century, of which Locke's model of mind was a fundamental part. As we know from There is No Natural Religion, Blake did have Locke in mind about this time. If, in the Songs, Blake does not bring Lockean epistemology forward as a target for criticism, the Lockean model of mind is nonetheless a concern that seems to motivate Blake's structural procedures in these early poems.

As complex and innovative as the Songs are, when compared with the integrated structural/thematic assaults upon Locke that Blake will eventually construct, these early efforts seem relatively tame. However, even in the Songs one can sense the emerging methods by which the Lockean theory of mind will be undermined or debunked. Gleckner, for instance, claims the Songs "rouse the faculties to act" in specific ways which oppose eighteenth-century views of mind. It is his contention that "the care Blake took with point of view, recurring

symbols, and symbolic action" produced "major symbols" that intensify and expand "the significance and value of any one character in any one song ... beyond the immediate context." By means of this merging of minor characters into major symbols, Blake wanted to provoke his readers' sense of irony, force them to develop imaginative agility, and thus encourage them

> to do more than merely understand; that, he said, is a 'corporeal function'. He wanted them to imagine as he imagined, to see as he saw, even to recreate as he created.[16]

It is unfortunate that Gleckner does not offer more extensive readings of related songs to substantiate his claim. The readings he does offer effectively reveal the perspectival irony in two of Blake's songs, but on the whole Gleckner neglects Blake's particular methods for arousing in his audience the sort of perspectival flexibility required to "see as he saw." Nevertheless, Gleckner's claim does seem justified by a careful reading of the Songs. As one considers song after song, the major symbols Gleckner identifies as child, father, and Christ draw one's attention. A whole host of assorted minor characters, too obvious and too numerous to be listed, make awareness of these major symbols inevitable; there are, for example, fathers or obvious father figures in about half of Blake's songs. The relationship between these "minor characters" and major symbols is complex. Not only do the minor characters quickly generate a sense of larger symbolic

patterns, but also, once these symbolic patterns or major symbols have emerged, the minor characters absorb power from them at the same time they invest the major symbols with still greater significance. All this Gleckner implies. What he does not detail at all is precisely how minor characters carry contextual significance into or derive significance out of the major symbols of the Songs. It is in examining such details that one senses Blake's control of "minute particulars."

One particular technique Blake employs is imagery, but his is not imagery in any conventional sense. Though he makes use of the corporeal reference of natural imagery, Blake is much less concerned with corporeal reference than with the symbolic, connective, and ironic value of images. The colour white, for example, often appears in the Songs, either used to modify a noun adjectively or implied by a noun referentially. Yet perhaps in the Songs white is not, properly speaking, a colour at all, but rather the "colourless all-colour" of Moby Dick, for Blake employs white, as Melville does, to intensify its inherent ambiguity. This colourless all-colour dominates the verbalized colouring of the Songs: there are lambs, sheep, lillies, snow, winter, white and silver and grey hair, white wands, white clouds, minds and churches "appalled." In short, white is almost ubiquitous in the Songs, and to good purpose. To borrow Gleckner's terms again, white intensifies relationships between major symbols and minor characters. The obvious physical similarities of certain characters strengthen their symbolic bonds; the reader encounters "Old

John with white hair" (8), watching children on the "ecchoing green"; God, like a father with "silver hair"(9) in "The Little Black Boy" and again like the little boy's "father in white"(11) in "The Little Boy Found"; "Grey-headed beadles" (13), the "wise guardians" who lead children into St. Paul's on Holy Thursday; the "father white" whose looks shake "the tender limbs"(29) of his wayward daughter in "A Little Girl Lost." Though these repetitious images suggest how little interest Blake took in abundant nature imagery --a fact that should not be surprising, considering his distaste for corporeal thinking-- they are effective in linking characters, "major symbols," and whole poems Blake wants us to consider together. But this is not the only function of Blake's images of white. They also create in the Songs a tonal background that allows for rich ironies in particular poems. Consider, for example, "The Little Black Boy." Here the reader finds a poem about a black boy, born "in the southern wild"(9), who initially despairs of his skin colour. From his mother the black child hears wise words about the spiritual similarities of black and white children, but when the child naively takes her wisdom to the English child, the reader can easily enough sense the sad irony of her kind reassurance. The English child, "white as an angel," seems both the emissary and the likeness of the English God with "silver hair"; one doubts that the black boy's desperate declaration that his "soul is white" will be sufficient to raise him to the status of his angelic white counterpart. The ironies here draw one's

sympathies to the black boy's side, and sympathy is reinforced by the picture of a loving mother; by implication the English God and child, and more important, the bond between them -- their whiteness-- becomes suspect. In this same poem, the little boy's face is described by his mother --and here it is paramount that the reader realize that her outlook, however admirable, seems naively optimistic-- as being "sunburnt" by "the beams of love" from, presumably, the silver-haired God. The black child himself feels "bereav'd of light." The reader seems certain to sense in all this a strong association of the sympathetic black child with summer and sunshine, and perhaps, though far less consciously, a certain association of the silver-haired God with a somewhat colder season. It is associations like these, carried from song to song, which are partially responsible for subtle ironic effects in ostensibly "simple" or "childlike" poems. "Holy Thursday" and "The Chimney Sweeper," both in Songs of Experience, are only two of many poems obviously influenced by such a reading of "The Little Black Boy." It should be made clear, however, that the Songs do not crudely or melodramatically portray some white "evil." Whiteness is a technical device in the Songs for provoking, rather than reducing, one's sense of complexity. The image of the lamb, for instance, always plays upon the reader's attention, and in both "The Garden of Love" and "The Tyger," Blake seems to take advantage not so much of the symbolic value of previous images of white as of the white backdrop of his Songs to create poignant images of

"black gowns" (26) and "forests of the night" (24). And of course "white" was examined because it appears so frequently in the Songs; similar examinations of other images would not only reveal other sets of symbolic associations, but also reveal the "tensive interaction" of images and their symbolic effects in The Songs of Innocence and of Experience.

Seen in this way, the Songs suggest Blake was already developing anti-Lockean techniques in this early illuminated work. His imagery does make use of "standard" lexical reference, yet it also generates within the Songs as a whole its own new set of associative values. It is particularly appropriate that Blake can accomplish this with a word like "white," which in Locke's epistemology designates a "simple idaa," an idea about which there should be little interpretive disagreement. His ability to generate varied interpretive response to such a word undermines Locke's view of language: if, in the microcosmic context of the Songs, Blake can so easily defamiliarize and then symbolically expand or ironically invert the reader's sense of a word, one wonders how, in the larger linguistic community, any user of language can bind himself to some supposedly correct signification of words. Furthermore, when one considers that the ironic value of these images resists the reader's natural inclination to see each character from the same single perspective, it becomes apparent that Blake's language literally "arouses the faculties to act." In short, Blake's language moves readers; according to Gleckner's interpretation one is compelled to

step outside himself and see as others see, developing an imaginative agility that allows him, as Shelley puts it, to put himself "in the place of another and of many others" so that "the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own." [17] The measure of Blake's poetry, like that of his philosophical views, is always man.

Gleckner's interpretation of Blake's "major symbols" and minor characters distinguishes one anti-Lockean feature of the Songs. The techniques of "tensive interaction" may, as a whole, represent another evolving anti-Lockean device. Depending neither on sequential argument, nor on narration, nor on self-contained lyrics, Blake structured his Songs to stress cross-referential relationships between words, poems, symbols; and as a result we find ourselves, as has been shown, like the Bard who "Past, Present, and Future sees" (18), reading one poem packed with the intensity of previous poems and distant images. The reverberations of each Blakean song almost dispel our conventional understanding of literary time and space; in a literary, if not in a literal sense, our perception of each poem seems almost timeless, because as we read one song we feel the pull of interacting songs that occur both "before" and "after" the song at hand. It may well be that the best possible reading of the Songs requires us to lay all the "songs" before us. Blake, after all, recognized that the conventional organization of one song or page after another was inadequate for his purposes, and so he frequently shuffled the poems about in search of a new and evocative

organization.[18]

Perhaps the most effective anti-Lockean aspect of "tensive interaction" has less to do with Locke's perceptual theories of time and space than with Locke's abstract thinking. "Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul," as the subtitle tells us, the Songs dramatize "the interaction of the apparent dualities in our experience of the world" and embody "the strivings of these dualities for unification."[19] This unification, as Blake's elaboration of the theory of contraries in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell will soon reveal, involves no explicit synthesis: the techniques of tensive interaction are intended to intensify our sense of contraries and simultaneously withhold any reasoned synthesis. "'A poem,' says Wallace Stevens, 'should almost successfully resist the intelligence'," and this is precisely what the Songs collectively do.[20] The psychological tension, or as Blake would say, the mental activity that results prolongs our present perception of ideas or images, and when the mind is fully active in present perception, when that perception resonates with the intensity of past or distant images, we are protected from abstraction or "Immortal demons of futurity." Nature abhors a vacuum (or, to use Locke's term, a "void"); to prevent systematic analysis or abstract reasoning from rushing in, Blake fills our thoughts with the activity provoked by tensive interaction.

One can appreciate the intensity of these cross-referential relationships only by reading and rereading Blake's Songs,

but some sense of their variety can be achieved by briefly examining almost any two songs in the light of the whole collection. Consider, for example, "The Divine Image" from Songs of Innocence and "The Human Abstract" from Songs of Experience. The structural similarity and semantic opposition of the titles suggest a strong relationship between the two poems, and the treatment of "Mercy" and "Pity" in both opening stanzas confirms this suggestion. On one level the poems may be considered as individual units, but on another level the poems should clearly be considered together. But our reading must extend beyond even this comparison of contraries. The dynamic flame-like border design of "The Divine Image" is so similar to the illustrations to "The Blossom" and "Night," and the dark, heavy illustration to "The Human Abstract" so much like that of "A Poison Tree" and perhaps even "A Little Boy Lost," that we feel compelled to consider some link with those poems, too. Eventually the reverberations of the two central poems begin to encompass most of the Songs. When we recognize from close readings of each poem that, although God and the Devil have no existence apart from us, the one is us and the other a fabrication of our "mutual fears," then we begin also to question the significance of other songs that once seemed relatively simple. From another angle, we now move back into the poems shown to be linked by recurrent images of white, and begin to appreciate on just how many levels Blake's poems interact. Just who, we now wonder, is the maker of "the lamb" and "the tyger," who the

God of "The Little Black Boy," "The Little Boy Found," "The Little Vagabond," and the two "Chimney Sweeper" poems? These are not the loose questions of an undisciplined reading: the images, designs, structures, titles, characters, and major symbols of the Songs compel us to seek beyond the borders of each ostensibly child-like song in an attempt to answer some of the profound questions the Songs raise.

The diction in the Songs is so deceptively simple that such anti-Lockean interpretations of Blake's early poetic techniques may seem superimposed.[21] There are, after all, no obvious references to Locke, no explicit demands for reader imagination, no overt signs that Blake was obsessed with questions about mind and perception. On the other hand, the fact that all these concerns do become more prominent in a work written contemporaneously with many of the Songs suggests that these were ongoing concerns during the creation of the Songs of Innocence and of Experience, that Blake's anti-Lockean attitude was already influencing the structures of his work. With The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Blake offers not only his first explicit encouragement to reader imagination, but also his most radical and imaginatively activating structure to date. The sophisticated anti-Lockean techniques of Blake's most mature work are beginning to emerge. It is as though, in surveying his own Songs, Blake had come to realize the significance of his earlier innovative techniques, of what I have called "tensive interaction."

In The Marriage of Heaven and Hell Blake explicitly states

what the formal structures and subtitle of the Songs only implied:

> Without Contraries is no progression Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence (34)

The theory of contraries is central to Blake's thought, not only in The Marriage but also in future poems. It represents Blake's belief that, as Martin Nurmi says, "a Human world must be informed by opposed yet positive and complementary forces which when allowed to interact without external restraint, impart to life a motion and tension that make it creative."[22] We are not to think of these contraries in any negative sense, for as Blake himself tells us, "Contraries are Positives/A Negation is not a Contrary" (128); nor should we think of contraries as converging sides of a Hegelian dialectic: there should be no synthesis of Blake's contraries. Rather, contraries are positive opposites that create "their identities constantly in terms of their opposites."[23] The tiger and the lamb achieve identity by virtue of their "contrariness"; without the lamb, the awesome tiger might not seem such a potent symbol of power, strength, and beauty. But it is a symbol, nonetheless: since in Blake's view there are no material objects, the tiger and the lamb should not be seen as corporeal animals, but as creative perceptions of man before the fall, gates to eternity for our fallen vision. When we see "what immortal hand or eye" has framed its fearful symmetry, the tiger will no longer intimidate us; we will

instead exult in the power, strength, and beauty of an imagination that can create such creatures. Similarly, when we recognize that Hell is not evil, but is the perverted manifestation or abstraction of man's energetic vision, we will no longer passively perceive as organized religion and systematic philosophers tell us we must. Good and evil, Blake would say, are abstractions and negations, and heaven and hell are priestly prisons founded on them. They arose because weak reasoners were frightened by the energy of creative men.

As Blake sees it, the creative relationship between contraries is threatened by mutually destructive divorce in the "Age of Reason," and so he makes it his job to prevent this. This does not mean Blake rejects reason: that would merely replace the imbalance he sees with a new and equally destructive one. He tries instead to compensate for his readers' dehumanizing faith in reason by offering and encouraging an energetic display of imagination. In The Marriage of Heaven and Hell Blake has it both ways: he defies the restrictions of traditional wisdom and traditional forms like the rhyming couplet, which he believes are forms of "modern bondage" (144), because adopting such traditional wisdom and forms will never arouse his readers; yet recognizing that "Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy" (34), he at the same time adapts or transforms such forms in order to give his immense energy perceptible shape. He uses what he will later call "Error" as a means of revealing truth.

Blake's eclectic appropriation of past sources is no minor

feature of The Marriage: it profoundly undermines Locke's view of memory and advances Blake's own viewpoint. Blake does not merely reuse remembered forms and ideas, but transforms then in an imaginative act for the sake of the "Eternal Now," for that is where he and his readers should exist. "This," says Nietzsche, "is how history can serve life."[24] In the very act of transforming history Blake also reminds his readers that mental act is life; that is, his themes in The Marriage tell us that in much the same way he reads history and historical texts we must read him, for without imaginative perception of the past we are what is past: we are intellectually dead. By transforming the past into subtle promotions of visionary interpretation, Blake sheds unnecessary historical fact to free his reader and evoke acts as imaginative as his own.

Blake's transformed sources are also woven into a loose classification of perceptual types that further promotes an active reading of the text. Indeed, this classification explicitly links the act of perception to the acts of reading and writing. For Blake, there are various ways of perceiving, each dependent upon the amount or quality of imagination employed. In comparing these ways of reading and perceiving, Blake himself engages in the most imaginative sort of reading, just as he imaginatively sees a "company of the heavenly host" where the miser sees a guinea: he reads actively, rather than passively or corporeally, transforming his sources into ideas that can revivify his own mental existence.

Blake's eclectic appropriation and perceptual classification begins early in The Marriage and quickly compels reader activity by means of ironic reversals and subtle figures of speech. Immediately following an opening verse "Argument" we are told

> As a new heaven is begun, and it is now thirty-three years since its advent: the Eternal Hell revives. And lo! Swedenborg is the Angel sitting at the tomb; his writings are the linen clothes folded up (34).

To appreciate this passage we must recover one piece of information Blake's contemporaries in London would have taken for granted: the New Jerusalem Church was founded by Swedenborg in 1757.[25] The convenient coincidence that 1757 was also the date of Blake's birth and thirty-three years before he began The Marriage is fully exploited by the author. He thus associates himself with Christ, who apparently "revives" as the "Eternal Hell," and by this ironic inversion announces that the "Devil" who is resurrected in The Marriage is only showing the imaginative energy of Christ. This compact, ironic treatment of names, along with the implied parallelism of Blake's and Christ's resurrection, pushes readers towards a reassessment of traditional values just as it compels them to see another essential point of Blake's terse opening: since Christ has already arisen, one wonders why Swedenborg remains by the tomb. The reader who thinks as Swedenborg does will surely miss Blake's meaning here; apparently, Blake thinks Swedenborg is a slave to corporeality and awaits the physical

rather than the spiritual resurrection of Christ. He has read the Bible literally, and his writings, it seems, reflect this passive reading. They are the very garments Christ rejected upon leaving this world. Swedenborg, Blake suggests, has misunderstood Christ entirely, but he has company in this misreading: The Marriage later associates him with "systematic reasoning," "Aristotle's Analytics," and "the void" of Newtonian and Lockean thought (41). Followers of all such doctrines or methods will mistakenly believe, to use a later word of Blake's, the resurrection occurs "withoutside" (163) rather than within. Swedenborg is nothing more than a Lockean metaphysician dressed up as a mystic.[26]

When we pursue Blake's text further his perceptual scheme becomes clear. By Blake's ironic reversal, those who "have the vanity to speak of themselves as the only wise" (41) and who see "the enjoyments of Genius as torment and insanity" (35) are called "Angels," mere idolaters of orthodox religion. Swedenborg and all those associated with him are angelic writers. Swedenborg's work is only "a recapitulation of all superficial opinions," "the Contents or Index of already publish'd books," nothing but "old falsehoods" (41-42). In short, he read and wrote without imagination. One may write, on the other hand, as Milton did. Though he wrote "in fetters when he wrote of Angels & Gods" (35), Milton wrote freely of "Devils & Hell ... because he was a true Poet and of the Devil's Party without knowing it" (35). Blake bases this opinion of Milton on his own interpretive recovery, a now famous reading

of the Book of Job and Paradise Lost. He therefore shows us, just as he tells us, that he is a third and more imaginative kind of reader, akin to the Blakean Christ. Both have, to the ears of Angels, "the voice of the Devil."

Blake proves himself to be an imaginative reader by transforming many more sources than those required to present his loose classification of writers. In fact, The Marriage is permeated by literary and historical allusions that reveal Blake's Nietzschean tendency to use, by appropriating, rather than "abuse," by merely remembering, the past. It opens with an angry prophet whose name may well be derived from "Indra," the name of the God of thunder in Hindu mythology.[27] It borrows heavily from and liberally interprets the Book of Isaiah in order to draw parallels between strife-torn Europe and biblical history, thus intensifying Blake's self-promotion as revolutionary saviour.[28] It rewords some lines from Thomas Chatterton's "The Dethe of Syr Charles Bawdin" as a means of aligning Blake with "the poetic Genius" and exposing what is temporary in the poet's eternal vision.[29] It even borrows, or rather parodies, the characteristic technique of the man it most criticizes: in Swedenborg's own Heaven and Hell, Swedenborg habitually stated doctrine and followed it "with a documentary 'memorable relation'."[30] All of this is further evidence of Blake's defamiliarizing what is remembered by reason so that it can be imaginatively perceived anew. To be sure, Blake reveals his memory of literary traditions, but he is not bound by the ideas or insights of his precursors.

Rather, as one critic has suggested of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, "Blake invokes tradition only to subject it to radical transformation."[31]

Blake would say that by transforming tradition, he exerts his native genius, just as Christ, "who acted from impulse not from rules" (42), did when he broke the ten commandments. In this way he frees himself from the past, or at least shakes off its domination of vision. His purpose. however, is not nihilistic: Blake only wishes that men would recognize "that All deities reside in the human breast"(37), and so he writes his "Bible of Hell" in order that he might raise "other men into a perception of the infinite"(38), as the great prophets did before him. When we break though the chains of abstract moral reasoning or rules as Christ did, the finite will become infinite. Put another way, Lockean thinking inhibits life, so we must see through, not with, the eye. As Blake tells us,

> The ancient tradition that the world will be consumed in fire at the end of six thousand years is true. as I have heard from Hell .... the whole creation will be consumed, and appear infinite.
> This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment.
> But first the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul, is to be expunged; this I shall do, by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.
> If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite(39-39).

The central image here may be one key to The Marriage. "Printing by the infernal method" serves not only as a figurative

reference to Blake's actual printing process --which involved using a corrosive solution to eat away the unvarnished surface of the copper plate, "leaving letter and design in low relief"[32]-- but more significantly as a symbol of Blake's entire poetic vision and procedure. To the truly imaginative man, Blake believed, imagining and perceiving are one act: imaginative perception creates anew the minute particulars before it. Blake prints in the "infernal method" because he sees and reads in the "infernal or diabolical sense" (43), that is, by the method of the Devil, who as untamed energy has been misnamed "evil" by "those who restrain desire" (34). In more conventional terms, he reads Milton, for example, imaginatively, not judging Paradise Lost by literary canons that concern themselves with the conventions of the epic form or with the relationship of Milton's text to his earlier poems, but grasping by intuition what he believes was Milton's essential view. All creation is to Blake "error," a sacrifice of true vision to the bonds of, in Milton's case, language. What Blake tries to do by his infernal reading of Milton is recover the poet's "true" vision.

The special importance of Blake's symbol of infernal printing can be sensed by even a casual reading of the text. Fire is certainly the dominant image in The Marriage, visually as well as verbally. The colours of the illustrations are predominantly red and orange, and graphic images of fire, lightning, or flame-like configurations appear on at least one third of the plates; the opening clause and closing

sentences both refer to fire,[33] and between those two references we hear that fire is associated with Genius (35), with Jehovah (35), with Lions (39), with the devil and hell (40-43), with Elijah (42), and of course with Christ and the author himself by virtue of their implied association with "Eternal Hell." Fire is not, however, the predominant image in The Marriage simply because it is a book about "Hell," nor only because Blake wants to emphasize his faith in creative energy, which is associated with the devil and is the stuff of life itself. Fire and images of fire dominate The Marriage because, like the "Bible of Hell" (43) Blake promises in his closing lines, The Marriage is the reader's inferno, wherein he too should be resurrected. It is a book printed by the infernal method, speaking to us in the voice of the devil, offering us "Proverbs of Hell," blaspheming Christ: when we enter into it, we join ranks with Blake and the "Devil's Party," reading history and historical texts imaginatively, perceiving imaginatively, opening the doors of perception. Indeed, if Blake succeeds with each reader as he succeeds with his "particular friend" who "was consumed and arose as Elijah," the plates of The Marriage become the doors to "Eternal Hell": a statement not to be interpreted pejoratively, because in Blake's vocabulary that means each reader will always rediscover a timeless, imaginative state when he reads Blake's text.

The theory of contraries, the thematic and figurative provocations to reader imagination, the imaginative

appropriation of historical and literary sources, and the images of fire all direct themselves at the mind which sees history, literature, and corporeal percept as "fact." But Blake's finest means of criticizing Lockean reasoning and perception are his structures. While Blake's transforming vision, thematic ironies, and figurative language provoke active interpretation, his structural techniques in The Marriage sustain a sharp tension that, like the "tensive interaction" of the Songs, promotes Blake's theory of contraries. As it begins, The Marriage seems to move away from formal conventions altogether and threatens to disintegrate into a random sampling of energetic observations. The opening assaults us seriatim with an oblique verse "Argument," a sort of preface in narrative, descriptive, and persuasive discourse, a tract listing errors as seen by an unorthodox devil, and a literary commentary upon Milton and the Bible. As Blake knows, however, without the bounding line of reason, energy would have no form; without form, energy would only expand itself into chaos.[34] He therefore holds the free movement of The Marriage in check with at least some recognizable formal devices. The "Memorable Fancies" are one such structural device. By explicitly alluding to Swedenborg's method, they may have reassured Blake's audience by ostensibly identifying Blake's unusual work as parody of a sort, but in any case they are repeated frequently enough in The Marriage to provide some coherent structure through repetition. In fact, Martin Nurmi's reading of The Marriage as a sort of "rondo" in three parts

is based largely on a recognition that the "Memorable Fancies," each of which is preceded by a section of exposition, set up a definite pattern in Blake's text.[35] The images of fire are also structurally important in The Marriage. They appear so frequently in so many guises that they operate as a structural and thematic motif of special significance, linking both Blake's belief in visionary perception and his own method of printing to his radical versions of Christ and the Devil. In this way they serve as Blake's central means for uniting light ironies with serious eschatological statements.

Yet The Marriage is far more than a loosely structured text that occasionally relies on conventional means of formal organization. One can sense the immense energy of the mind behind the text. Like an active imagination pushing against the walls of Lockean reasoning, The Marriage defies from within the outward forms it takes on. "The Argument" is a case in point. As the opening to a work that, as the title suggests, ostensibly deals with eschatological issues of epic proportions, "The Argument" might seem to offer a traditional opening form. Structurally, however, this opening provokes interpretations that undermine rather than promote the notion of tradition. "The Argument" begins and ends with the same two lines in the present tense:

> Rintrah roars & shakes his fires in the burdend air;
> Hungry clouds swag on the deep (33)

Each couplet describes both prophetic and elemental anger;

together, they seem by their repetition after eighteen intervening lines to indicate the beginning and end of some cyclical action, and so, as might be expected, a narrative of sorts is given between them. But the narrative movement of "The Argument," which by stanzaic, chronological steps advances from "Once" to "Then" to "Till" to "Now," is at one point interrupted by three salient lines of present tense description:

> Roses are planted where thorns grow.
> And on the barren heath
> Sing the honey bees.

The lines at first startle us by virtue of the paradox they suggest. How, we might ask, can the heath be barren if there are honey bees on it, and why would one plant roses "where thorns grow" ? These paradoxical juxtapositions of roses and thorns, of barren heaths and honey bees --the inversion of first letters emphasizes both connection and opposition-- soon generate another reaction by virtue of their placement: as interruptions of a continuous narrative, they seem "outside" of time, and therefore take on the significance of universal truths. These lines are not, however, merely universal truths about roses and bees, or about nature in general: their paradoxical character, their counter- narrative placement and consequent atemporal reference, and their self-conscious manipulation of typographical appearance all tend to make these lines resound with relational rather than referential truth. In other words, these lines depict the interdependent

relationship of all apparent opposites, and when we sense that they do so, the relational truth they state has a magnetic pull on our reading of the entire "Argument." Apparent opposites of peril and ease, life and death, spring and tomb seem paradoxically linked, and, as we are reminded by the repeated closing couplet that ends a cycle and by the title of the text itself, so too are past and present and heaven and hell. When we turn the page, enter Blake's Marriage, and hear that "a new heaven is begun" (34; emphasis my own), we can assume "The Voice of the Devil" revives in our ears too. Like Blake's images of fire, "The Argument" ultimately defamiliarizes our sense of opposing values or ideas, and makes us question the ontological character of the very text before us: is The Marriage a remembrance of things past, or is it a battle of present forces ?[36]

If "The Argument" uses narrative interruption to defamiliarize the reader's sense of Lockean time and, more important, undermine conventional expectations about textual reference -- upsetting, that is, the Lockean distinction between signifier and signified-- the penultimate "Memorable Fancy" uses narrative description to play upon the reader's conventional acceptance of corporeal perception. This "Memorable Fancy" depicts "An Angel" (40) and someone the Angel considers a "pitiable foolish young man," presumably Blake himself, travelling through or observing a variety of scenes so that each can show the other his "eternal lot" and the two can "contemplate together" to see which lot is "most desirable." The angel first

leads the young man through a stable, a church, a church vault, a mill, and a cave, until finally the pair stands before "a void boundless as the nether sky." The young man is willing to "commit" himself to the void to "see whether providence is here also," but the Angel cautions him, so the two sit in the "twisted roots of an oak," the Angel suspended "with the head downward," watching the hellish depths of the void. To this point, the narrative has indeed been a "Fancy." In fact, Locke himself explicitly defines the "fantastical" as "such as have no foundation in nature"(II,xxx,1), and though there are one or two natural images in Blake's narrative, the scenes as a whole have so implausible a connection with nature that Locke's definition seems quite appropriate. Corporeal reference suddenly emerges, however, when fanciful narration brings the reader to the scene viewed by the Angel and the foolish young man:

> But now, from between the black & white spiders a cloud and fire burst and rolled thro the deep blackning all beneath, so that the nether deep grew black as a sea & rolled with a terrible noise: beneath us was nothing now to be seen but a black tempest, till looking east between the clouds & the waves, we saw a cataract of blood mixed with fire and not many stones throw from us appeard and sunk again the scaly fold of a monstrous serpent. at last to the east, distant about three degrees appeard a fiery crest above the waves. slowly it reared like a ridge of golden rocks till we discoverd two globes of crimson fire, from which the sea fled away in clouds of smoke, and now we saw, it was the head of Leviathan, his forehead was divided into streaks of green & purple like those on a tygers forehead: soon we saw his mouth & red gills hang just above the raging foam tinging the black deep with beams of blood, advancing toward us with all the fury of a spiritual existence (40).

The descriptive poignancy of this passage is unlike anything else in The Marriage or The Songs. Physical similes, sharp, varied colours, measurements suggesting a physical setting, and a precise succession of descriptive details --as first the scales, then the fiery nostrils, then the forehead, gills, and mouth rise above the surface of the waves-- all combine to make this "fantastic" scene corporeally "realistic." Indeed, fanciful narration has been superseded by description so vivid that the reader sees and, perhaps in spite of himself, almost fears this scene. The effect is somewhat like that evoked by Revelations. How surprising, then, is the return to narration, when, with the Leviathan advancing with "all the fury of a spiritual existence," Blake tells his readers this:

> My friend the Angel climb'd up from his station into the mill; I remain'd alone, & then this appearance was no more, but I found myself sitting on a pleasant bank beside a river by moon light hearing a harper who sung to the harp, & his theme was, The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water, & breeds reptiles of the mind.

As the similarity of the closing words to the fifth and forty-fifth "Proverbs" suggests, this is the voice of the devil, showing readers the errors of their ways. Corporeal vision, the vision of man rooted in the earth and seeing upside-down, has been drawn out, yanked away, mocked, exposed as fraud. The reality of the textual description, however, remains; it is only the intransigent reader who breeds reptiles of the mind. When Blake then shows the Angel his eternal lot, he

does so by opening a Bible, descending into it, and describing his vision of its orthodox reading. What can happen inside the text, Blake is suggesting, is as "real" as what happens outside, for "All deities reside in the human breast" (37).[37]

Though "The Argument" and the fourth "Memorable Fancy" structurally assault conventional or Lockean expectations, nothing in The Marriage is quite so startling or provocative as the "Proverbs of Hell." They may borrow the bounding stability of traditional aphoristic forms, but their wisdom is not traditional. Quite the contrary: Blake's proverbs are there to "break down orthodox categories of thought and morality."[38] Their placement is also critical to one's reading of the entire work. Just as the reader has learned to grapple with the bewildering variety of new forms of expression in the opening of The Marriage, just as he is gradually recognizing that it is in the very act of sensing form that he realizes the immense energy of the work, the proverbs appear. Their form, variety, and abundance fulfill the very message set forth: in spite of the variety of grammatical voice and mood, rhetorical arrangement, and semantic reference that the proverbs exhibit, perhaps because the proverbs so frequently suggest ideas of enclosure and release, the predominant impression the proverbs evoke is that language, no matter how well used, can never frame or contain "truth." If, as Blake says, "The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the destructive sword. are

portions of eternity too great for the eye of man"(36), how unlikely that the tongue of man should frame the human imagination. And Blake takes advantage of this impression. As the reader moves through the proverbs, these most tightly controlled yet expansively energetic of Blake's structures, as he reaches their very center, there, at the thirty-fifth of seventy proverbs, when form realizing energy may pass a threshold into form constraining energy, Blake offers two sharp and related messages:

> The cistern contains: the fountain overflows.
> One thought. fills immensity.

The parallel clauses of the thirty-fifth proverb reinforce the bond between apparent opposites, and seem structurally to capture Blake's thought, but as the reader moves into the thirty-sixth proverb, he is reminded that truth cannot be contained. One can never rest with a contrary thought: it must be eternally renewed to be realized; otherwise, as Blake suggests in his penultimate "Memorable Fancy," an imaginative truth will merely become a reasoned imposition.

The "Proverbs of Hell" may be Blake's most successful means to date for counteracting Lockean epistemology, which Blake believed to be a reasoned imposition that glorified the senses and the analytical mind. These proverbs encourage us to believe Blake when he says "Knowledge is not by deduction but Immediate by Perception or Sense at Once" (653). But the proverbs do not operate in isolation: each one may

have the unique face of a fine gem, but none would shine so bright without Blake's fiery imagery, infernal vision, and structural minute particulars. Like the Songs, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell generates stimulating tensions by complex oppositions. When we see that Blake achieves these oppositions through his transformative visions of past forms and ideas, we are inclined to read his own text more freely, exerting our imagination to achieve our own infernal vision of Blake's thought. Visitors to Blake's "inferno" are told by the host himself to read as he reads, not by restraining desire or by using "Analytics" (41), but by exerting energy against the boundaries of reason. We should not, therefore, doubt any lively reading of The Marriage too much. As Blake's proverbs tell us, we live in energetic mental acts, and learn by the errors of our actions: "What is now proved was once, only imagin'd."

CHAPTER FOUR

Jerusalem

After he had finished the illuminated Songs of Innocence and of Experience and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Blake continued with formal and thematic experiments designed to counter the impact of Lockean theories and "arouse the faculties to act." In the 1790's he wrote a variety of illuminated poems exhibiting new political themes, startling and sometimes dominant designs, and the beginnings of a new personal mythology. Though full-page designs and political concerns were also to play a part in Blake's work after the turn of the century, it was really the personal mythology that became most characteristic of the nineteenth-century poems. By the time Blake was writing Jerusalem, an embryonic mythology had evolved into a full-bodied mythopoeic vision. Political themes and experimental graphics were subsumed within what David Bindman calls "a psychological drama, or psychomachia, in which the principal characters [represent] mutually warring attributes of a universal mind."[1] Still, the anti-Lockean themes and defamiliarizing techniques permeate even the mythopoeic works. As Blake himself has told us, when he was in his forties and presumably working on Jerusalem he felt "the Same Contempt & Abhorrence" of Lockean theories that he had felt "when very young" (650). He wanted always to remind his

readers of and free them from a reasoned imposition that "seemed to be."

Though the mythopoeic shape of Blake's final long poem bears little resemblance to The Marriage, even less to the Songs, the structural and thematic roots of Jerusalem can be traced back to those earlier poems through a line that includes much of Blake's work. Blake's anti-Lockean sentiments consistently infiltrate and inform the structures and themes of his poetry. In 1793, for example, shortly after the completion of Songs of Experience, there appears in Visions of the Daughters of Albion the first of Blake's enduring mythopoeic characters; he is used as a means of identifying "your reason," the "mistaken Demon of Heaven" (47) who is always confining imaginative vision with limiting "horizons."[2] One year later, in Europe: A Prophecy, Blake ostensibly focuses on political issues, yet beneath the "apparent surfaces"(38) of political commentary lies the author's "infernal" interpretation of those ideas which bring about political oppression: deism, time as eternal duration, the philosophy of the five senses, and Newton's "grave" mechanistic science.[3] In Urizen, written in 1795, Blake not only employs "formal principles of interaction" like those of the Songs,[4] but also expands his mythopoeic vocabulary so that his "scathing satiric critique" can encompass the whole of eighteenth-century rationalism and its offspring: natural religion.[5] It has been generally accepted that this attack on tyrannical reason contains some of Blake's "most splendid" art.[6] Finally, in Milton, his

last complete illuminated poem before writing Jerusalem, Blake further develops the symmetrical structures used in Urizen to defamiliarize his readers' sense of cause and effect, plot, and sequence, making all fifty pages of his text describe "a single instant ... [of] ... no measurable duration."[7] According to one critic, this timeless poem is neither story nor picture: it is a "state," Blake's name for mental or perspectival conditions through which "Individual Indentities" (131) pass. E.J. Rose suggests that "Milton the state is ... Milton the poem,"[8] the body of thought in which the individual poet Milton is revealed in his imaginative essence so that readers might enter, see as a true poet, and thus escape the states of Memory and Reason (131).

As much as it reveals the persistence and inventiveness of Blake's anti-Lockean efforts, this interpretation of Milton provides a clue for reading Blake's final illuminated work, Jerusalem. The text is extremely complex, and the concept from which it derives its name is very elusive. In Blake's mature mythopoeic thought, Jerusalem is the "Emanation of the Giant Albion" (143) and the female portion of "every individual Man" (185). Ideally, that is "eternally"--when imagination is fully active-- men are androgynous; whenever an emanation for any reason splits from her male portion, a "Female Will" results, and this Will then opposes the divided and false man that remains, what Blake calls a "Spectre." It is important to recognize that this Spectre has no existence in the mind until man rejects or grants autonomy to his

female portion; only then does this "Great Selfhood/Satan" (173) exist as "the Reasoning Power/An Abstract objecting power, that Negatives every thing"(151). Once the emanative portion is reintegrated into imaginative man, the Spectre is simultaneously "cast off." The text Jerusalem is about, among other things, Albion's rejection and eventual reintegration of Jerusalem, his creation and subsequent casting out of the Spectre in an age of revolution and corporeal warfare; about Albion rejecting Jerusalem, "Who is Nam'd Liberty/Among the Sons of Albion" (169), losing imaginative vision, and then finally reuniting with her in an apocalyptic embrace that frees all men.[9]

Like Milton, however, the text is not merely about its subject: Blake wants Jerusalem to be Jerusalem, the means by which all men may free imagination. Believing that he lives in an age of the Spectre, and that there is no choice, as a fallen man who "becomes what he beholds,"[10] but to work with his Spectre rather than against him, Blake allows the visionary Los to work through him with his Spectre to create Jerusalem, so that men might benefit by a vision of Jerusalem. As Blake tells us in A Vision of The Last Judgment, such a creation is inevitably erroneous, because "Truth is Eternal" (555); yet the author must commit this "mental sacrifice"(172) of perfect vision, for without the palpable but imperfect text men will continue to rely on Lockean reasoning "In England's green & pleasant land" (95). Besides, this "mental sacrifice" is not as unfortunate for the author as it first

seems. The act of sacrificing perfect imaginative truth by creating art is, Blake tells us, divine:

> Each Man is in his Spectre's power
> Until the arrival of that hour,
> When his Humanity awake
> And cast his Spectre into the Lake (182)

God is, for Blake, "the Divine Humanity" (173), seen by men when they embrace Jerusalem as "the likeness & similitude of Los" (253); the imaginative act of Blake/Los, who is motivated by a desire to free his countrymen from the chains of Lockean thought, is accordingly divine. One might think that by formalizing Jerusalem Blake/Los merely submits to the systematizing drive of the Spectre, but as far as Blake is concerned that would be interpreting the act of imaginative execution as Swedenborg interpreted the resurrection of Christ. "Execution is the Chariot of Genius" (632): when Blake executes vision poetically and pictorially, he also executes the Spectre, which forever threatens the artist with solipsistic or objectifying separation from his fellow man. Put another way, Los may be so named because he is so closely linked to imaginative "loss"[11]: since imaginative acts are eternal and divine, the temporary sacrifice of perfect vision for the sake of the imagination of Albion is itself an imaginative act --indeed, the most divine imaginative act-- and a reentry into eternity by the creation of the temporary. The "chariot" of Blake's execution, in short, conveys the executor back into eternity, and provides the vehicle wherein we, his readers, can also

enter "Eden." This is what Blake means when he says several times through his work, "The ruins of time build mansions in eternity" (678).[12]

Yet to help build these mansions, the spectator of every human act, poem, and painting must realize the divine origin of these palpable deeds. This can only be done through an emanation, which, as the female portion of man, is receptive to each man's unique viewpoint:

> When in Eternity Man converses with Man they enter
> Into each others Bosom (which are Universes of delight)
> In mutual interchange, and first their Emanations meet
> Surrounded by their Children, if they embrace & comingle
> The Human Four-Fold Forms mingle also in thunders of Intellect
> But if the Emanations mingle not; with storms & agitations
> Of Earthquakes & consuming fires they roll apart in fear
> For Man cannot unite with Man but by their Emanations
> Which stand both Male & Female at the Gates of each Humanity ...
> When Souls mingle & join thro all the Fibres of Brotherhood
> Can there be any secret joy on Earth greater than this? (244)

The cataclysmic "agitations" are reminders that the Lockean reasoner receives from his fellow man the same treatment he receives from his beheld Old Testament God. On the other hand, the joy of emanative embrace is ultimately the joy of man's communion with God, for Jerusalem is not only the emanation of Albion and the emanation of "every individual man," but also the "Bride of the Lamb" (187), the emanation of the Lord.

Consequently, when Albion's humanity awakes, when he simultaneously casts off his Spectre and embraces his emanation Jerusalem --an embrace that is accomplished only by "Mutual Forgiveness" (201)-- he converses eternally with the Lord, who is the "Universal Humanity" (253). In Blake's view, this "Mystic Union of the Emanation in the Lord" (201) is the realization of "The Divine Humanity, who is the Only General and Universal Form" and "Who protects minute particulars, every one in their own Identity" (183). Jerusalem herself, when acting as the emanation of the undivided man, has no form: she is rather the female principle that permits men and minute particulars to interact, the means of keeping contraries from becoming negations, the "pull" of the general form that tends to push warring, unique particulars apart.[13] With her, mental warfare is eternally creative: without her, Spectres soon initiate corporeal war and crush any minute particulars that will not be systematized. As Los says, "All Quarrels arise from Reasoning. the secret Murder, and/The Violent Man-slaughter. these are the Spectres double Cave" (213).

Jerusalem, elusive though the concept may be, is Blake's ultimate answer to Locke and to all systematizers. As the means by which men "enter into each others bosoms," as the emanative portion of man that draws all minute particulars into imagination, Jerusalem defies the entire inside/outside dichotomy implicit in Locke's deistic materialism. Locke describes an insular man who reasons with, remembers by, and tries to communicate through general formations of particularized

corporeal reality, but such a man is, according to Blake, merely a Spectre, a false man, doubly deluded by his belief in Selfhood and corporeal reality. To the Spectre, the Lockean man, Jerusalem seems unreal because she cannot be seen or abstracted; but to Blake's androgynous man, Vala --Jerusalem seen corporeally-- is the illusion, the veil, the desperate percept of a man who cannot withstand "the Great Wars of Eternity" (128), where all particulars exist within the imagination. "All Knowledge is Particular"(637), says Blake; "Mental Things are Alone Real"(555). Though it is the Lord, the Imagination, the Divine Humanity, who protects minute particulars, without his emanation man could never realize, that is, truly know, particulars.

This is why Blake creates Jerusalem. It is an imperfect creation, as are all creations, but unless Blake makes this sacrificial offering his "Divine Vision"(191) of Jerusalem will seem, to his readers in Albion, to hide in "impalpable voidness"(166). He can only hope that his readers will forgive the spectral errors of the text, and praise the Spectre "Because he kept the Divine Vision in time of trouble" (191). If the reader does so, Blake believes Jerusalem will become Jerusalem. And this equation should not seem, to the literary analyst, a case of imitative fallacy. It is instead another dimension of Blake's imaginative answer to the Lockean inside/outside dichotomy. In The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Blake's images and structures provoked questions about the being of the text; now, Jerusalem more frequently suggests that the "mansions

in Eternity" must be built with and within the "stubborn structure" (181) of language. There is no reality to which language, verbal or visual, points: symbols, when grasped, are reality, for man cannot exist without such symbols in a world where "Mental Things are Alone Real."[14] Unlike Lockean discourse, Jerusalem is not intended to be an object that passes on information about its subject, Jerusalem, from one thinking man to another; it is the latent symbolic vehicle in which Blake and the reader meet, the object that exists only when imaginatively perceived and that, once perceived, becomes an entry into Eternity and a vision of "the Divine Humanity."[15]

Though the verbal and visual evidence Blake offers readers is, as usual, oblique, there are plenty of clues in Blake's text to confirm this connection between Jerusalem and Jerusalem. The opening three plates are especially suggestive. On the frontispiece, for example, the design seemingly employs a "corporeal" image of entrance as a visual symbol for opening the text. Beneath an archway on which are written the words "There is a Void, outside of Existence, which if enterd into/ Englobes itself & becomes a Womb" (143), the eternal pilgrim Los enters a door into Jerusalem, and with a hand that beckons the spectator/reader to follow seems simultaneously to enter Jerusalem.[16] If the reader does so, he is soon greeted by a prose apology from the author, who asks forgiveness for what cannot be approved so that Blake and his reader can together be "Wholly One in Jesus our Lord." A verse then

follows. It seems designed, like the headings on plate three, to separate "The Public" into "goats" and "sheep," for it is ambiguous enough to provoke an unconventional reading yet allow for a conventional one. What the verse does, in fact, is exploit the reader's own familiar sense of syntax to defamiliarize his understanding of larger issues:

> Reader! lover of books! lover of heaven!
> And of that God from whom all books are given,
> Who in mysterious Sinais awful cave
> To Man the won'drous art of writing gave,
> Again he speaks in thunder and in fire!
> Thunder of Thought, & flames of fierce desire:
> Even from the depths of Hell his voice I hear,
> Within the unfathomd caverns of my Ear.
> Therefore I print; nor vain my types shall be:
> Heaven, Earth & Hell, henceforth shall live in
> harmony (144).

Should the addressed reader consider himself the lover of books, heaven, and God, or should he, alerted by the implications of the frontispiece, consider the prepositional phrases overlapping? Do books=heaven=God?[17] And what about the unexpected descriptive shift in lines seven and eight? The reader's expectations initially prompt him to read "from the depths of Hell" as an adverbial phrase modifying "hear," perhaps because the author has already confessed that he may be "the most sinful of men," perhaps because an adjectival phrase beginning with "from" and preceding the noun it qualifies is such a rarity that the reader ignores the possibility of its occurrence. In other words, semantic and syntactical expectations allow the reader, even encourage him, to read the line as a conventional figure of man rooted in a sinful

earth, listening to the voice of a distant God. However, when the reader encounters the next line a startling ambiguity arises. Because the notion of hearing an external sound "within" the ear --rather than "with" or "through" the ear-- seems obscure, the reader feels compelled to recognize that the sound must be internal.[18] This considered, the semantic similarity of "unfathomd" and "depths" provokes an almost inevitable conclusion: all the phrases in lines seven and eight are adjectival; the audible voice of God is in the author, rising from the depths of some inner hell.

From that conclusion other complexities arise and provoke intensified awareness of both the process of reading and the text at hand. If, for example, the author hears an inner God from an inner Hell, does he mean to imply (as his diction suggests), that "Sinais awful cave" was "the unfathomd cavern" of Moses' ear? The author does tell the reader that "all books are given" from the same God; Moses was apparently, therefore, given "the wondrous art of writing" in the same way verse was "dictated" (144) to Blake to "print." And if all books are given from the same source, does the "lover of books" read or hear from heaven and hell simultaneously? Blake may be suggesting this in his last line. Does he tell readers that his "types," mythological and typographical both, will speak through the thunder and fire of the printer's burning acid, will "live" as the reader now enters Jerusalem? Blake does not explicitly say, but then, as Blake says in his letter to Dr. Trusler, the inexplicit is best for instruction.

Resolution is not his goal: he seeks to "rouse the faculties to act," and his ambiguous address accomplishes that --at least for those readers who love Blake "for this energetic exertion of his talent." As Blake tells readers in his prose apology, he "entrusts" his love to his writing, and his writing is there to provoke thought and engage the reader so that both parties can enter "into the Saviours kingdom," be "Wholly One in Jesus our Lord." These self-professed purposes characterize Jerusalem precisely. Though the novitiate cannot yet know it, he is entering Jerusalem as he enters the text. And to Blake's way of thinking, only those who offer "Half-Friendship" (143), who do not forgive what they do not approve, who refuse to let their emanations "comingle and embrace" Blake's in the text, will remain "withoutside"(179), disgruntled by Blake's "presumptuousness and arrogance."

A number of Blake scholars have accepted or briefly explored the significance of this apparent equation of Jerusalem and Jerusalem, but none has offered a more stimulating interpretation of text as subject than Roger Easson.[19] In "William Blake and His Reader in Jerusalem," Easson claims not only that "Jerusalem is a poem about itself," but also that Jerusalem is "a poem about the experience of reading Jerusalem ... a poem that enjoins the reader to participate with its writer in the creative process."[20] Blake encourages this creative participation by a variety of defamiliarizing techniques, employed in the belief that if the author distorts or confuses the rational, coherent, familiar literary structures

which obscure his "allegoric drama," he will discourage dependence on reason and force the use of imagination. In his effort to undermine the impact of Lockean epistemology, Blake discourages any sort of deductive analysis; his poetry now "necessitates inductive leaps" even more than did his earliest enthymemes.[21] The most effective of his defamiliarizing devices is, according to Easson, the "obscuring matrix of narration."[22] As other scholars have insisted, Jerusalem is not a linear poem; it cannot be read as chronological narration or as desultory epic. If the reader depends on narration to understand Blake's poem, he will certainly be "hurled into frustration and confusion," for the narrative aspects of Jerusalem only "progress in complexity and obscurity."[23] Like Milton, Jerusalem defies the duration/succession theory of Lockean epistemology by exploiting conventional literary expectations. Nevertheless, claims Easson, in order to find Blake's allegoric drama, "a thing of greater beauty and value" than the obscuring narrative, one must recognize the narrative and "isolate it from the drama."[24] One must "strip the narrative veil away from the body of the drama,"[25] or, to use Blake's words, burn up error so that truth will appear. By employing the narrative only to discredit it, by using it, as it were, as a structural foil, Blake not only defamiliarizes the reading process and rouses the faculties to act, but also reveals those conventions which had previously inhibited such arousal. Yet the reader must not now condemn the illusions of narrative art: as Blake explains in his

opening address, "The Spirit of Jesus is continual forgiveness of sins" (144). Like Mary in Jerusalem's third chapter, the reader must recognize that his humanity makes new vision possible"

> ... if I were pure, never could I taste the sweets
> Of the Forgiveness of Sins! if I were holy! I
> never could behold the tears
> Of Love! of him who loves me in the midst of his
> anger in furnace of fire (209)

For every error recognized there is a more moving truth realized; if any perceiver becomes frightened of error itself, he becomes fearful of mental action. Blake wants the reader to embrace Jerusalem without bitter memories, so he shows, in effect, that the corporeal veil makes the "Naked Beauty" more moving, that error encourages revelation of truth. In man's fallen state, there can be no perception of eternal truth without the creation of error: imaginative thought emerges through the bursting of conceptual bonds.

As imaginative as it is, Easson's interpretation of Jerusalem seems suspect in one sense: when Easson strips away the narrative veil, he sees an "allegoric drama" that is simply too neat. One wonders if Blake himself would see Easson's perfect four chapter, sixteen scene drama as another "Swelld & Bloated General Form" (183) or as a Lockean construct of "Druidical Mathematical Proportion" (97).[26] Yet in this regard Easson's interpretation is certainly no worse than other analyses of Jerusalem. Though, as Hazard Adams has suggested, "Jerusalem has been a sargossa sea for more than one critic

seeking to discover its scheme,"[27] critics have nonetheless insisted on finding "the" structure of Blake's poem. Henry Lesnick, for example, accepts the narrative in Jerusalem and claims that its "progression is one which presents the successive stages of the fall."[28] Karl Kiralis, on the other hand, believes Jerusalem has a three part structure that describes the growth of childhood, manhood, and old age; while E.J. Rose suggests that one of the "Four Zoas" controls each of the four chapters in Blake's poem.[29] Irene Chayes tells us the basic structural unit of the poem may be the single plate, and therefore she analyzes the twelfth plate of Jerusalem in the hope that such analysis will illuminate the whole poem's significance.[30] And E.B. Murray takes Blake's image of the "golden string" and ball as a literal comment on the structure of Jerusalem.

> I would like to suggest that when you wind up a a string you retrace its original course. The ball of string, that is, has been rolled out by someone who has been where he is inviting us to go. Specifically, then, Blake is telling us to to go back where he came from if we want to get to Heaven. The image of reversed movement is the one which I am interested in developing as a self-referential key to the meaning of Jerusalem.[31]

By the authors' own admissions, these interpretations of Jerusalem do not account for all the poem's details; nevertheless, these critics all seem convinced that Jerusalem has some one essential, general structure. As Stuart Curran so aptly puts it, "the tendency in accounting for the structure

of Jerusalem is to play for big stakes and not fret about the pennies."[32] This tendency contradicts Blake's very purpose. As he says in his annotations to Reynolds' Discourses, in a statement that should run like a refrain through the mind of every Blake scholar, "All Knowledge is Particular" (637). And lest we think, by some strange inversion of Lockean epistemology, that the mind realizes this particular knowledge by observing some general source, Blake reminds us throughout his final poems that the "Divine Humanity who is the Only General and Universal Form ... protects minute particulars"(183). There are, of course, a multitude of reminders that great art is particularly, not generally, articulated, and the spectator/reader must view it as such --unless he chooses to become the abstraction he beholds:

> It is in Particulars that Wisdom consists & Happiness too .... as Poetry admits not a Letter that is Insignificant so Painting admits not a Grain of Sand or a Blade of Grass Insignificant (550)
>
> For Art & Science cannot exist but in Minutely Organized Particulars
> And not in generalizing Demonstrations of the Rational Power (203)
>
> ... he who wishes to see a Vision; a perfect Whole
> Must see it in its Minute Particulars ....
> General Forms have their vitality in Particulars (249)

One wonders why the critics, who know Blake's statements about art and technique so well, ignore these comments when assessing Jerusalem. Jerusalem is not "the Only General and Universal Form"; Jerusalem is the female portion of this form,

the emanation who encourages the interaction of opposing minute particulars. The form Jerusalem takes on as Jerusalem is error to be stripped away by imagination rather than admired by the abstracting, remembering Lockean reason. Blake would say that when the reader sees Jerusalem formally he sees Vala.

Apart from the superficies of four chapters, each beginning with an address to a different segment of the reading audience, Jerusalem may well have no general structure whatsoever. It would be wrong, however, to assume that for this reason the poem is merely chaotic. Clearly, Jerusalem is not a random display of letters on paper: it offers a very complex body of interrelated thoughts. It is only that the fundamental principles underlying such thoughts insist true knowledge is realized only when particulars are uprooted from system. Literature that depends on architectonics is system masquerading as art; therefore, Blake must not only avoid creating structures that weaken the effect of particulars, but must also dismantle or obviate general conceptions that the reader abstracts or will soon abstract as he reads the text. He must defamiliarize the reading process so that the reader can occasionally pull away from the text, evade any emerging abstract ideas about structure, and again reenter, refreshed and free of literary "system." To Blake, even linguistic particulars are suspect: when a word is heard too often, it loses resonance, is merely remembered rather than imaginatively revitalized. Yet this language is all Blake has to work with;

without it, there would only be "Dumb despair" (181). He must therefore make Jerusalem a body of language at war with itself. As the word threatens to become intransigent, it must be again pounded on the anvil of Los; as every phrase, clause, sentence, and verse paragraph threatens to build particulars into a systematic structure, word groups must be undermined. . And this is why the work of Blake/Los "is always accomplished in the midst of the ruins that are continually made of it."[33]

Blake, in short, is constantly defamiliarizing, lest familiarity breed containment. His proper names are one aspect of such defamiliarization. They not only "work to disrupt associations with received mythologies,"[34] but also seem to alter their value within Blake's own mythopoeic oeuvre. When Blake says in A Descriptive Catalogue, "Names alter, things never alter" (524), he might well be referring to his own poetic practice. [35] Because unalterable mental things can be imaginatively realized only in symbols, names must alter, or the remembering will not seize the mental thing newly, freshly, imaginatively. This may be one of the reasons why, as Susan Fox has shown, the value of a Blakean proper name seems to change from one poem to the next. The Urizen of Milton is not the Urizen of Jerusalem.[36] This may also explain what V.A. de Luca calls "one of Blake's most puzzling habits: his way of introducing unknown proper names before presenting the context which will make these names intelligible."[37] In Jerusalem the most elusive of these names may be

"Golgonooza," which may refer to Blake's unique city of art. Golgonooza is referred to on twenty-two occasions spread across thirteen plates of Jerusalem. We are told that "Los stands in London building Golgonooza" (151); that "the Mundane Shell" is "above; beneath: on all sides surrounding/Golgonooza" (156); that "Enthuthon Benythons deep Vales" are beneath Golgonooza (157); that "the Land of Erin" centers in Golgonooza (225); that "Cathedrons golden Halls" are in "the city of Golgonooza" (276); that the earth will sometimes "assimilate with mighty Golgonooza" (239); yet only once are we clearly given a direct description of Golgonooza, and that description focuses on the "gates " of the city rather than on its interior. Golgonooza itself cannot be envisioned easily by any reader:

> Fourfold the Sons of Los in their divisions: and fourfold,
> The great City of Golgonooza: fourfold toward the north
> And toward the south fourfold, & fourfold toward the east & west
> Each within other toward the four points ....(154)

The description then continues in this vein for forty-seven lines, before the reader is told that "Around Golgonooza lies the land of death eternal" (155). This return to the surroundings of Golgonooza after unpalatable descriptions of its "fourfold" gates suggests that Blake is wilfully defying both visual response and abstract generalization about his subject. Golgonooza is not something that can be entered by a Lockean reasoner, who considers all that is not rooted in

nature to be "fantastical" (II,xxx,1). In fact, such a man will never even reach the gates of this city, let alone pass by the genies, gnomes, fairies, and nymphs who guard them. Gologonooza can be seen only by Los, who moves in and out of the city with ease, yet resides within, walking "round the walls night and day" (156):

> All things acted on Earth are seen in the bright
> Sculptures of
> Los's Halls & every Age renews its powers from
> these Works
> With every pathetic story possible to happen
> from Hate or
> Wayward Love & every sorrow & distress is carved
> here
> Every Affinity of Parents Marriages & Friendships
> are here
> In all their various combinations wrought with
> wondrous Art
> All that can happen to Man in his pilgrimage of
> seventy years (159)

Los, it will be recalled, is a "Vehicular Form" (200) because he moves among men rousing each man's faculties to act. Only the man actively imaginative, "vehicularized," that is, by Los, can enter this city and realize its beauty. The Spectral reader, man viewing art as frivolity, commodity, or, as Locke calls rhetoric, fallacious eloquence, remains outside the city. So too does the Urizenic thinker who seeks for a single meaning in art. This may be why the designs on plates twelve and thirteen, the plates that describe the exterior of Golgonooza, show a woman seeking joy with a compass and a man grasping for a "grotesque bat moth" that he has mistaken for a cluster of grapes: these are "false actions," says

Erdman, revealing "the misguided search for certain knowledge of joy and the illusory effort to justify desire by possession."[38] Though Blake's use of the proper name implies the thing itself, if the reader tries to analyze the text or remember word associations to seize the exact significance of "Golgonooza," he will find nothing, and "become what he beholds." The sign "Golgonooza" has imaginative significance only: it is art which awaits the seed of contemplative thought (545), and therefore can be envisioned only by an imaginative leap of faith.[39]

Such elusive signification of the proper name is but one means by which Blake uses names to inhibit Lockean reasoning. As de Luca points out, Blake's proper names sometimes have no significance whatsoever. De Luca quotes a passage from The Four Zoas and then offers an analysis that could easily be applied to the sixteenth and seventy-first plates of Jerusalem. The only difference between de Luca's passage and those in Jerusalem is that Blake has adopted, rather than designed himself, many of the proper names in the said plates of Jerusalem:

> It seems gratuitous to speculate, as some commentators have done, upon the possible symbolic reference of these nonce creations, as if characters with a specifiable significance maintained an independent if shadowy existence behind them in Blake's imagination. What is more readily apparent is their arbitrary effect, since nothing in the surrounding context ... serves to identify them further, nor does the elaborate specificity of the roll call contribute to the communicative value of the context. It seems clear that Blake's preoccupation with naming so far overtakes the

> claims of narrative continuity that whole blocks of verse comprise nothing but names, a large proportion of them wholly mysterious. The effect is incantatory, a reconstitution of a primitive numinous power inherent in a ritualized utterance of sonorous syllables.[40]

This primitive incantatory effect may well be an anti-Lockean technique. The names do not merely tax, indeed arrest, the functioning memory: they restore the reader's awareness of sensual pleasure amid a language that tends to become abstruse in its fight with both abstract philosophy and corporeal signification. Blake's name lists are, both literally and metaphorically, music to the ear, a rest from "the Great Wars of Eternity" (128). Such incantatory passages should also remind readers that Blake made the "song" a salient feature of his work: most of his poems are either called or contain "songs." It could be that they were not meant to be read, but said or sung. As the illustrations to the Book of Job show us, "The Letter killeth. The Spirit giveth Life." When Job and his family lay down their books and lift their instruments from the tree of life, the sun rises, and the players are blessed by the Lord.[41]

Without musical accompaniment, Blake tries to give his letters themselves the spirit of the orator. As he tells his readers in the opening address to Jerusalem, rhyming is merely a form of "modern bondage," so he produces a freer line that can manage both the subtle and the sublime:

> When this Verse was first dictated to me I consider'd a Monotonous Cadence like that used by

> Milton & Shakspeare & all writers of English Blank Verse, derived from the modern bondage of Rhyming; to be a necessary and indispensible part of Verse. But I soon found that in the mouth of a true Orator such monotony was not only awkward, but as much a bondage as rhyme itself. I therefore have produced a variety in every line, both of cadences & number of syllables. Every word and every letter is studied and put into its fit place: the terrific numbers are reserved for the terrific parts--the mild & gentle, for the mild & gentle parts, and the prosaic, for inferior parts: all are necessary to each other. Poetry Fetter'd, Fetters the Human Race! (144)

This is an ambitious claim, but one that has not yet been refuted. Alicia Ostriker does suggest that "too much of Jerusalem is 'inferior'" and "prosaic,"[42] but she bases this evaluation on a standard Blake did not even try to meet: "beauty ... in the ordinary sense."[43] "Ordinary sense" is, in fact, precisely what Blake wants to upset; he thinks that is the sense of Lockean epistemology, the sense which makes Albion sleep "in the land of shadows" (145). Albion, as Roger Easson claims, is the reader of Jerusalem; like a nineteenth-century Bertolt Brecht, Blake must arouse this reader to the "Visionary forms dramatic" (255) on his illuminated stage.

The movements of Blake's lines often produce little or no rhythm, if we think of rhythm as being pleasant and "natural." Yet they do arouse. Sometimes they do so simply because they are strikingly unusual or, to extend the comparison with Brecht, "verfremd."[44] Ostriker herself quotes two such lines from the third chapter of Jerusalem:

> Calling the Rocks Atomic Origins of Existence:

denying Eternity
By the Atheistical Epicurean Philosophy of
Albions Tree (218)

The lines represent an ironic metrical rendition of the "music of the spheres"; the spheres, however, are "the Starry Wheels/Which revolve heavily in the mighty Void" (147) or, as Blake calls them elsewhere, "the Water-Wheels of Newton," which power the "Loom of Locke .... with cogs tyrannic" (157). This may be why Ostriker calls the lines a "burlesque jog."[45] But Ostriker should also have noticed that the closing rhyme, rare in Jerusalem, is a clever means of associating contemporary poetry with what Blake believes is its scientific and philosophical companions. Nevertheless, the passage is but a minor example of Blake's parodic techniques. More frequently, by parodying the mood of an acting mythopoeic character, for instance, Blake can remind readers of an actor's shortcomings. This keeps the reader from being pulled into the action of Blake's page, when he might otherwise lose perspective and "become what he beholds." In the following example we see Los at the moment of division between him, his emanation, and the Spectre, who curses Los "for his friendship/To Albion":

> Los rag'd and stamp'd the earth in his might &
> terrible wrath!
> He stood and stamp'd the earth! then he threw
> down his hammer in rage &
> In fury: then he sat down and wept, terrified!(147)

Is this literally the offspring of falling Albion? The conduplicatio, or repetition of words in succeeding clauses, is

reinforced by the repetitive clausal structures, the simplicity of diction, the quick reversal of Los's mood, and the weak modifier set off by a final pause. This is the reaction of an enraged child without power, the startling yet laughable motions of an infant --a word that literally signifies, as Harold Bloom has pointed out, the "voiceless."[46] Just four plates later Los begins to recover his voice, but Blake now uses speech to expose speaker:

> Los cries, Obey my voice & never deviate from my will
> And I will be merciful to thee: be thou invisible to all
> To whom I make thee visible, but chief to my own Children
> O Spectre of Urthona: Reason not against their dear approach
> Nor obstruct with thy temptations of doubt & despair.
> O Shame O strong & mighty Shame I break thy brazen fetters
> If thou refuse, thy present torments will seem southern breezes
> To what thou shalt endure if thou obey not my great will (152).

When the absolutes "never" and "all" are qualified in the third line, the rounded "o's" throughout sound like the echo of a hollow threat. The Spectre recognizes these nuances for what they are: indications that Los is suffering torments of his own. To test the "great will," the Selfhood then throws back the accusing word that reveals self doubt: "Art thou not ashamed....? he asks. The conversation again informs the reader by virtue of Blake's minute particulars that "we become what we behold"; anger becomes behold anger, shame behold shame.

But there is more to this passage. The reader not only sees, by grasping the nuances of Blake's unrhythmical lines, that the Spectre and Los will remain divided so long as they threaten each other; he also senses a third party exposing this negative relationship. This is, of course, Blake, or if you like, Blake as Jerusalem. By using his text to let the reader sense the inadequacy of either perspective of the divided Albion, Blake serves as the force that lifts the reader above such divisiveness. By hearing behind the divisive voices of erroneous twin perspectives the voice of an unsaid irony, the reader, his faculties aroused, communes with Blake and, figuratively speaking, embraces Jerusalem.[47] The rhetoric Locke condemns as a "perfect cheat" (III,x,34) thus becomes "the chief means" of communication.

The irony of the opening plates of Jerusalem is subtle, but pervasive. It is brought about primarily by the opening address and the speaker's identification with Christ, with whom, Blake tells his readers, he "pretends" "to love, to see, to converse with daily, as man with maan" (144). This identification makes any subsequent rejection of Christ or Christian values (as interpreted by Blake) by the characters in Jerusalem suspect. When, for example, Albion inverts Christ's claim "we are One" and claims instead that "We are not One: we are Many" (145), the reader might expect that the many who spring from Albion —the first of whom are Los, his emanation, and the Spectre— will also be the victims of a beheld delusion that love "binds/Man the enemy of man into deceitful

friendships" (145). The rhetorical depiction of Los as enfant terrible exemplifies this delusion.

It is a grammatical "minute particular," however, which most subtly conveys the irony that helps readers apprehend the perspectival errors of Los and the Spectre and sense the voice of Blake. With his use of progressive participles Blake embodies his belief, at this stage of Jerusalem only implied, that "we become what we behold"; as an aphorism asserting the primacy of the perceiver, "we become what we behold" mocks the Lockean reasoner at the same time it frees the imaginative visionary. In the following passage the participle reinforcing this belief is used as an adjective at a moment when Albion splits. The lines immediately precede the depiction of Los as frustrated child:

> ... and the Spectre stood over Los
> Howling in pain: a blackning Shadow, blackning
> dark & opake
> Cursing the terrible Los: bitterly cursing him
> for his friendship
> To Albion, suggesting murderous thoughts
> against Albion (147)

The shadow is "blackning" both because the Spectre is enraged and because he enrages Los: he blackens those who behold him becoming black, or, to put it less dichotomously, both Spectre and Los blacken as a concomitant of their divisive contentions.[48] Blake's punctuation, always hard to pin down, here seems to intensify grammatical ambiguity. Without a comma to guide him, the reader cannot ascertain whether "Howling in pain" adjectively modifies Los or adverbially modifies "stood,"

the Spectre's act. Ambiguity, in any case, is fruitful here: Blake conveys the interdependence of psychic forces by defamiliarizing normal grammatical and syntactical functions. As Jerusalem later states, "If the Perceptive Organs close: their Objects seem to close also" (175). Thus "the opake blackening Fiend" Los sees modifies both perceiver and percept.

Another more revealing use of the progressive participle again involves the Spectre in Jerusalem's first chapter. Here the reader must sense a complex double irony in order to grasp an essential Blakean idea encapsulated in but a few words from the Spectre:

> ... Life lives on my
> Consuming: & the Almighty hath made me his Contrary
> To be all evil, all reversed & for ever dead (152)

Pleading for compassion, the Spectre sees himself as the mortal man born to die, as the Selfhood victimized by corporeal decay; Los, on the other hand, feels he cannot offer compassion, or he himself will be consumed by the Spectre's corporeal vision. The ambiguous participle therefore does not depict the Spectre as either victim or aggressor, as the reader might first think, but as both, when considered alternately from irreconcilable and reversed perspectives. Herein lies the first irony: Los, frightened by the Spectre's fear of being consumed, is consumed by his fear; or, to put it in a less Blakean way, the mind obsessed with avoiding victimization becomes a victim of its obsession. It is this fear

that makes Los interpret "Life" as the Spectre does, that is, corporeally, or according to the generalizing method of a Lockean lexicon, which might define "life" by observing what is common to living organisms. But Los should never see as the Spectre sees: he should, as redemptive imagination in the falling man, transform the Spectre and his words into vision, make error the "necessary enemy" of truth. And herein lies the second irony, which only the reader can help Los grasp: what the Spectre states as corporeal truth and Los mistakenly inverts is in fact ironically true when seen from the perspective of Los "activated" or "vehicularized," that is, when read figuratively. It is not corporeal life but imaginative "Life" that lives on the Spectre's consuming, for as imagination allows its vision to be "consumed" by form --in the same way Blake sacrificially "executes" vision in a divine act of imagination-- imagination revitalizes men and "consumes" their spectres. The reader can only see this, of course, with Blake's help. Since "Life" is a noun that does not customarily change semantically as it changes function grammatically, the repetition of "Life" as a verb "lives" seems redundant, unless the reader realizes the immaterial "figurative" designation of Blake's noun and thus the ironic truth of the Spectre's words. From the imaginative point of view, the repetition is not <u>agnominatio</u>, or repetition of a word with change in letter or sound, but <u>antistasis</u>, the repetition of a word in a different or contrary sense.[49] Realizing this, one again hears the voice of Blake behind the minute particular;

again the reader feels Jerusalem to be the vehicle of creation and communion, as Jerusalem should be.

Ronald Clayton Taylor has considered Blake's use of verbs and verbals at some length, and finds that Blake's participles serve a different though by no means incongruous or contradictory anti-Lockean purpose to the one discussed above. According to him, Blake's participles are a means of depicting the simultaneity of events and the eternalization of processes. As a means of defamiliarizing the reader's conventional expectations about tense and grammatical cause and effect, they are another device for subverting Locke's view of time, which, as has been said, posits a multitude of corpuscular-like discrete moments succeeding one another in an unending duration of cause and effect. For Blake, the only "great chain of being" is a "mind-forg'd manacle" that imprisons men in a hell outside of Eternity. The "fall" is not an event of one ancient man's life, but the event of losing vision in the one giant Man as vision is lost in each individual. Few events are, in Blake, forever "done with," or as Taylor puts it, Blake "is always in the 'going';only rarely does he 'get there'."[50] On one level, this grammatical depiction of unending process undermines the narrative form: "because it cannot predicate definite change," the progressive participle "can never establish a definite sequence, which is the essence of narrative."[51] On another level, these participles tax the reader so much he seeks some resolution to the continuous process and ambiguity. This is when Blake offers

him what Taylor calls "universalizing states," passages in the simple present tense that expound "the eternal nature of some part of the Blakean cosmos":

> The overall picture of Blake's style that results from a consideration of two important modes is that of a great mass, characterized generally by "endless" strings of process predications mixed with semantically "frustrated" events. The whole is uneasily pulsing with activity; the reader is exposed to process after simultaneous process, each of which starts to vibrate as he cognizes it, but few of which are resolved, and even fewer of which result in something temporally solid. Amidst this mass of conceptual motion, there are moments of static calm, varying in frequency depending on the ... section of the poem. These moments are very welcome to the reader, whose time-sense is buzzing with process-lag or still perturbed by unresolved events. He finds relative clarity in the moments of calm, and consequently he listens closely to the universal assertions that come direct from the author.[52]

Taylor's interpretation seems sound. It avoids the abstraction of a general structure to Jerusalem and yet implies, as Blake himself told readers in his opening address, that "Every word and every letter is studied and put into its fit place ... all are necessary to each other" (144). Nevertheless, the reader should be cautious about accepting Blake's "universalizing states" at face value; if the reader is, as Taylor suggests he will be when he encounters the pleasant calm of a passage in the simple present tense, "willing to rest quiet and be taught,"[53] he should not try to piece these sections together as though they were the parts of a Blakean puzzle. As Roger Easson points out, referring to by the name of "visionary definitions" precisely the same passages Taylor

calls "universalizing states," "Blake uses a host of rhetorical ploys to achieve ... the illusion that the pieces of definition must be collected and fit together."[54] All knowledge is particular: if the reader tries to fit the visionary definitions into a system he commits "one of the major errors of the reasoned approach to Jerusalem." [55]

Any "reasoned approach" that treats Jerusalem as a problem or puzzle to be solved may well be erroneous, for there are no passages in the text to which the reader can point and declare, "this is the key" --unless perhaps the reader points to passages that reveal not the meaning of Jerusalem, but the motives of the author, and these in themselves contradict the desire for categorical meaning: "to open the immortal Eyes/Of Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought" (146); "to deliver Individuals from Systems" (153). Nor is there any perceptible form to which the reader of Jerusalem can point and declare, "this is the essential structure of the text" --unless of course he calls the text an "anti-form."[56] Nevertheless, like the Angel "whose works are only Analytics" (41), readers of Blake continue to abstract from or impose upon Blake's text structures and meanings, seemingly in pursuit of a solution to the puzzle of the text. This search for the form and meaning of Jerusalem reaches its most extreme state in the remarks of Blake's "commentator," Harold Bloom:

> The structure of Jerusalem raises many problems, which the poem's critics (this one included) have not been able to solve. Yet the problem may be

> only that the poem has not had enough accurate and close readers yet; in time it may seem no more and no less difficult in structure than The Faerie Queene or The Prelude, works curiously and wonderfully put together but each on a basis not so discursive as it may first appear(843).

One is reminded by such comments of Blake's many references to the mistaken desire for immutable answers. It is Urizen's longing "for a joy without pain,/For a solid without fluctuation" (73); it is the cry of a mistaken soul who will soon loathe what he possesses.[57] And it is this desire "to bind to oneself a joy" that ultimately produces general interpretations, both of texts and friends, because the desirer can never accept the fact that, no matter how minutely articulated, "every little act,/Word, work & wish" (156) remains elusive, come and gone in the moment of enjoyment. But the desired general certainty only destroys joy. Searching memory and judgment for the reason why the thing is desired, analyzing and reconstructing so that the thing can be continually appreciated as it once was, "every Minute Particular [is] hardend into grains of sand" and accumulated into "barren mountains of Moral/Virtue" (192); "all the Arts of Life" are "changd into the Arts of Death" (214). If one admires Blake or his text, which the author himself considers "the Advice of a Friend" (552), one must not seek for the certain knowledge of the man or his work. "Those alone are his friends, who admire his minutest powers" (183): "General Good is the plea of the scoundrel hypocrite & flatterer"(203).

To say the least, these are discomfiting words for

anyone who writes about Blake and feels what he is saying to be inevitably analytical and frequently "general." And perhaps this is why Bloom later renounced the "reasoned approach" characterized by his comments quoted above. Recognizing that Blake has become the object of "poetic canonization," and that "a canonical reading, like a canonical copying, attempts to stop the mind by making a text redundantly identical with itself, so as to produce a total presence, an unalterable meaning,"[58] Bloom takes on the same diabolical role as reader of Blake that Blake himself took on in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. Employing what he calls "antithetical criticism," he opens a particular in Blake's Songs, exposes "all received readings" of "London," and reveals "Blake's strong misreading or misprision" of his sources.[59] In doing this, Bloom disagrees with, criticizes, sometimes even demeans Blake; yet still, one does see Blake's text anew by hearing Bloom. And one senses that, whether or not Blake would appreciate Bloom's remarks, this is the way in which Blake himself read and advocated we read.

It may seem paradoxical, but it is creative "misreadings" like Bloom's, imaginative contraries rather than negations, that build Jerusalem "In Englands green & pleasant Land." For Jerusalem signifies men continually pursuing their own vision by conversing forcefully yet imaginatively with men who see otherwise. "Every Mans Wisdom is peculiar to his own Individuality" (97), and that individuality can be exercised only by imaginative response to what will forever seem the

erroneous articulations of other men. This is why Blake responds imaginatively to Locke, and why he defamiliarizes Lockean ideas or habituated Lockean thinking: he wants to provoke imaginative response to every error that threatens to become negative rather than "contrarious." "Drive your cart and plow over the bones of the dead," Blake says in The Marriage, because "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom."

Notes

Chapter One

[1] Geoffrey Leech, Semantics (Ontario: Penguin Books Ltd., 1978), p.43. See also Leech's A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry (London: Longman, 1974), p. 10.

[2] Graham Dunstan Martin, Language, Truth, and Poetry (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Press, 1975), p. 22.

[3] Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), p.51.

[4] Paul Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling," in On Metaphor, ed. Sheldon Sacks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 151. In the remarks that follow, Ricoeur's vocabulary is dubbed "Heideggerian" because his use of the word "dwell" so clearly refers to Heidegger's extensive use of the word in Poetry, Language, Thought (New York: Harper & Row, 1975). Heidegger also believes poetic language has a special capacity to say "of the unconcealedness of what is." See p. 73 and p.48.

[5] G.D. Martin, p.77.

[6] The quotations from Wordsworth and Coleridge can be found in convenient proximity in The Great Critics ed. James Harry Smith and Edd Winfield Parks (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1967), p.500 and p.542.

[7] Walter Jackson Bate, The Achievement of Samuel Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp.188-193.

[8] In Defamiliarization in Language and Literature (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1977), R.H. Stacy discusses various terms used to name the technique he himself calls "defamiliarization." He considers the terms "perspective by incongruity" (Kenneth Burke), "making strange" (Ezra Pound), "perception without apperception" (L. Stilman), and especially "the device of making strange" (V. Shklovsky). The term "defamiliarization" will be employed in my text in a slightly extended sense; here, it will be used to describe not only those techniques that "make strange" objects of perception but also those techniques that upset habitual modes of perception or patterns of thinking.

[9] Stacy, p. 32.

[10] The term "realize" is used here and throughout my text in a particular sense: "to make real as an object of thought ... to bring vividly or clearly before the mind"(OED).

[11] R.J. Merrett suggested this term to me in an informal discussion.

[12] Though local passages do not always make it clear, Blake often reiterates a distinction between mental and corporeal war. As he says in Milton, those who are opposed "In contrarious/And cruel opposition: Element against Element" are "opposed in War/Not Mental, as the Wars of Eternity, but a Corporeal Strife." See The Poetry and Prose of William Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1970), p.128. Subsequent quotations from Blake's work will have their page locations in the Erdman edition cited

in the body of my text.

[13] All but the last of these figures can be found in A Vision of the Last Judgment. The less readily accessible image of the garment is scattered throughout The Four Zoas and Jerusalem, but some notion of its significance can be grasped by reading Blake's brief poem "To The Accuser who is The God of This World." See The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, pp. 544-555 and p. 266.

[14] The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p. 254.

[15] Robert Merrihew Adams, "Editor's Introduction" to Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 1979), p.ii. Adams says of Berkeley's argument for immaterialism, "True or false, it remains one of the fundamental options that must be understood and debated by philosophical students of the nature of the world and our knowledge of it."

[16] Contemporary comments on Blake's sanity, some of which were formed in reaction to Blake's vocal support of immaterialism, can be found in William Blake: The Critical Heritage ed. G.E. Bentley, Jr. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 40.

[17] Donald Ault, Visionary Physics: Blake's Response to Newton (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. xii.

[18] In a letter written in April of 1803, Blake supports and elaborates on Christ's words "He who is Not With Me is Against Me" : "There is no Medium or Middle state & if a Man is the Enemy of my Spiritual Life while he pretends to be the Friend of my Corporeal. he is a Real Enemy". See

The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p.697.

[19] See the excerpt from "On Truth and Lie in an Extra Moral Sense," in The Portable Nietzsche ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (Ontario: Penguin Books, 1978), pp. 44-47.

Chapter Two

[1] David Erdman, Prophet Against Empire (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977); Mark Schorer, William Blake: The Politics of Vision (New York: Vintage, 1959); Jacob Bronowski, William Blake and the Age of Revolution (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965).

[2] T.J. Altizer, The New Apocalypse (Michigan: Michigan University Press, 1967); J.G. Davies, The Theology of William Blake (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974).

[3] Donald Ault, Visionary Physics: Blake's Response to Newton (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1974).

[4] Peter Fisher, "Blake's Attacks on the Classical Tradition," Philological Quarterly xl (1961), p. 1-18 ; Jean Hagstrum, "William Blake Rejects the Enlightenment," in Blake: A Collection of Critical Essays ed. Northrop Frye (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 142-155.

[5] See, for example, Robert Rosenblum, Transformations in Late Eighteenth-Century Art (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974). Blake's radical theology is also considered in H. Fisch, Jerusalem and Albion: The Hebraic Factor in Seventeenth-Century Literature (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964).

[6] Ault considers Locke only briefly in his third chapter. In Fearful Symmetry (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), Northrop Frye entitles his opening chapter "The Case Against Locke," but his discussion of Locke begins only halfway through the chapter, and as is so typical of Frye, the desultory comments that follow often wander from close analysis of the relationship between the thought of Blake and Locke. George Mills Harper's The Neoplatonism of William Blake (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961) is very informative about Blake's belief in innate ideas. As the title implies, Harald A. Kittel's "The Book of Urizen and An Essay Concerning Human Understanding," in Interpreting Blake ed. Michael Phillips (Cambridge: University Press,1978), p. 111-114, deals directly with Blake and Locke but isolates only one poem for study.

[7] These words appear in order of their increasing frequency in Blake's poetry. See A Concordance to the Writings of William Blake ed. David Erdman (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 2281-2288.

[8] Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1951), p.99.

[9] Locke is associated at various times with Urizen, Blake's bearded, icy symbol for "your reason" as a tyrant(66); with Satan, "Newtons Pantocrator weaving the Woof of Locke" (97) and "The Accusor who is the God of This World" (266); and with the "Female Will," which Frye defines as "belief in an ultimate externality." See Fearful Symmetry, p.263, and

The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p. 175.

[10] Michael Phillips, "Blake's Early Poetry," in William Blake: Essays in Honour of Sir Geoffrey Keynes ed. Morton D. Paley and Michael Phillips (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 1.

[11] This is Blake's reason for redeeming Locke in the apocalyptic ending of Jerusalem:

> ... at the clangor of the Arrows of Intellect
> The innumberable Chariots of the Almighty appeard in Heaven
> And Bacon & Newton &Locke, & Milton & Shakspear & Chaucer (254)

Of the inarticulate Reynolds, who Blake thought merely borrowed Locke's ideas, Blake says, "I consider Reynolds's Discourses ... as the Simulation of the Hypocrite who smiles particularly where he means to Betray" (631).

[12] For brief comments on Locke's style, see Ricardo Quintana, Two Augustans (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), p. 65.

[13] Blake's attitude to epistemology might again be compared to Nietzsche's. As Karl Jaspers says, "Epistemology, conceived as an attempt critically to analyze man's cognitive faculty, is simply an object of Nietzsche's contempt." The mind cannot analyze itself: it can only interpret. See Nietzsche: An Introduction to the Understanding Of His Philosophical Activity (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1969), p. 287-293.

[14] See John W. Yolton, John Locke and the Way of Ideas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 127: Though Locke "osten-

sibly proclaimed himself uninterested in the problem of the ontological nature of substance .... That he did not doubt the ontological reality of substance as commonly conceived in his century may be construed from his protestation to Stillingfleet that he was not among those thinkers who wished to read substance out of the world." This apparent split between matter and our knowledge of it eventually led to charges of Deism.

[15] John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (New York: Dover Publications, 1959), I, p.121-122. Hereafter references to this edition of An Essay will be located by book, chapter, and paragraph in the body of my text. This initial quotation from Locke is, for example, located in II, i,2.

[16] Even "intuitive knowledge," which Locke calls man's "clearest and most certain" form of knowledge, depends on corporeal perception. See An Essay, IV,ii,1.

[17] In William Blake: Poet and Painter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p.80-81, Jean Hagstrum draws a distinction between three kinds of Blakean designs: illustration, decoration, and illumination. The last refers to "the kind of page that unites border and design in a single visual motif." Though Hagstrum's distinctions certainly have value, I will use the term "illumination" in a less restrictive sense --as is more common in Blake scholarship-- to refer to any of Blake's designs that appear in a text including poetry.

[18] See Locke, An Essay, IV,x,1.

[19] Kathleen Raine, "Berkeley, Blake, and the New Age," Thought 11 (1976), 356.

[20] Frye, Fearful Symmetry, p.19.

[21] See the "Synopsis" on p.36 of the Dover edition (I) for a brief summary of Locke's arguments against innate ideas.

[22] See also The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p.552, 645, 635, and 637. Harper explains Blake's use of the word "Con-Science" in The Neoplatonism of William Blake, p.70.

[23] This is Erdman's estimate in his textual notes. The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p.801.

[24] Harper, The Neoplatonism of William Blake, p.67. My inserted appositive conforms with the opinion of Harper (p. 69), Frye (p.19), and Erdman, Prophet Against Empire, p.254, that the Poetic Genius is essentially an early manifestation of Blake's "Divine Imagination" or "Los."

[25] Harper, The Neoplatonism of William Blake, p.82.

[26] See, for example, the entry "Universals" by A.D. Woozley in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, VIII, p.199-200, and Bernard Harrison, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Language (London: Macmillan Press, 1979), p. 28-30.

[27] See Woozley, p. 200: "This appears to be a view which Berkeley fathered on Locke rather than one which Locke actually held."

[28] Woozley, p.200.

[29] Frye, Fearful Symmetry, p. 18.

[30] The connection between Locke and Reynolds is evident

throughout the Discourses. See Robert Wark's introduction to Discourses on Art (California: Huntington Library, 1959); and Walter J. Hipple's essay "General and Particular in the Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds: A Study in Method," The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism XI (1953), 231-247.

[31] See Blake's comments on the drawings of Thomas Heath Malkin:

> Had the hand which executed these little ideas been that of a plagiary, who works only from the memory, we should have seen blots, called masses; blots without form, and therefore without meaning .... All his efforts prove this little boy to have had that greatest of all blessings, a strong imagination, a clear idea, and a determinate vision of things in his own mind.

The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p. 671.

[32] George Berkeley, Essay,Principles, Dialogue ed. Mary W. Calkins (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p.119.

[33] See The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p. 522: "No man can believe that either Homer's Mythology, or Ovid's, were the production of Greece, or of Latium."

[34] In response to a remark of Reynolds, which advocates the imitation of masters and chides students for believing that art is a "matter of inspiration from heaven," Blake says

> How ridiculous it would be to see the Sheep Endeavouring to walk like the Dog. or the Ox striving to trot like the Horse just as Ridiculous it is to see One Man Striving to Imitate Another Man varies from Man more than Animal from Animal of Different Species (645)

What is true of painting is true of all things: "When men cannot read they should not pretend to paint." See The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p.530.

[35] Bertrand Russell, History of Western Philosophy (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1979), p.525.

[36] Kathleen Raine, "Berkeley, Blake, and the New Age," p.361.

[37] See "The Mental Traveller," in The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p. 476: "For the Eye altering alters all." In "The Symbolism of the Opened Center and Poetic Theory in Blake's Jerusalem," Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900 5 (Autumn, 1965), 587-606, E.J. Rose deals with Blake's idea of the "opened space" at some length.

[38] "Death's Door," the name Blake himself inscribed on his relief engraving for Blair's Grave, is considered briefly in The Illuminated Blake ed. David V. Erdman (New York: Doubleday/Anchor, 1974), p. 118, 144, 150, and 276. In "Blake's Human Insect: Symbol, Theory, and Design," Texas Studies in Literature and Language X(1968), 215-232, E.J. Rose refers to the "cocoon-womb." The tomb/womb image is a recurrent subject in Rose's work, to which I am indebted for my own interest in its significance.

Chapter Three

[1] In Visionary Physics: Blake's Response to Newton, Donald Ault uses the word "countersystem" to refer to Blake's means for assaulting the Newtonian world-view. See especially p. 27-30.

[2] Stanley Gardner, Blake (London: Evans Brothers Ltd., 1968), p.37.

[3] At least one critic disagrees with this view. According to James McGowan in "The Integrity of the Poetical Sketches: A New Approach to Blake's Earliest Poems," Blake Studies VIII (1979), p.125, "their imagistic coherency came about due to the extraordinary integrity of Blake's mythic imagination, operating even in his youth." Harold Bloom, in Blake's Apocalypse: A Study in Poetic Argument (New York: Doubleday, 1963), p.13, suggests "the best poems in Poetical Sketches are the work of a master, and even the worst can teach us much about the difficult poet who was to come."

[4] In the discussion that follows I treat the Songs of Innocence and of Experience as one unit. As Erdman says in his "textual notes" to The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, the Songs of Innocence were sometimes issued separately but "the songs of Experience required to be heard as counterpoint in the progression of contraries" (713), and so they were always issued with the songs of Innocence.

[5] Anthony Blunt, The Art of William Blake (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p.44-45.

[6] Brian Wilkie, "Blake's Innocence and Experience: An Approach," Blake Studies 6(1975), p. 121.

[7] Robert Gleckner, "Point of View and Context in Blake's Songs," in Blake: A Collection of Critical Essays ed. Northrop Frye (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p.10.

[8] Eben Bass, "Songs of Innocence and of Experience: The Thrust of Design," in Visionary Forms Dramatic ed. David V. Erdman and John Grant (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970), p.196-213.

[9] See, for example, W.J.T. Mitchell, Blake's Composite Art (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978); and David Erdman's annotations in The Illuminated Blake (New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1974), p. 41-97.

[10] Mitchell, Blake's Composite Art, p.4.

[11] Wilkie, p. 119.

[12] See Mona Wilson, The Life of William Blake (London: Granada, 1978), p.31; and David Erdman, Prophet Against Empire, p. 123.

[13] Kathleen Raine, William Blake (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 51.

[14] W.J.T. Mitchell, "Style as Epistemology: Blake and the Movement toward Abstraction in Romantic Art," Studies in Romanticism 16(Spring, 1977), p.151. Mitchell's remark is part of a disclaimer that Blake was a linear abstractionist. For Rosenblum's opposing view, see his Transformations in Late Eighteenth Century Art.

[15] Jean Hagstrum, William Blake: Poet and Painter, p.5.

[16] Gleckner, "Point of View and Context in Blake's Songs," p. 13-14.

[17] Percy Bysshe Shelley, "A Defence of Poetry," in The Great Critics, p. 563.

[18] See Erdman, The Illuminated Blake: "Blake tried a new arrangement every time he assembled a copy of the Songs of Innocence or of the combined Songs" (p.67).

[19] Mitchell, Blake's Composite Art, p.33.

[20] As quoted by G.D. Martin in Language, Truth, and Poetry,

p. 164.

[21] In "Blake's Diction -- An Amendatory Note," Blake Studies 7(1975), p. 167, J. Walter Nelson refers to Josephine Miles' demonstration "that Blake's poetry is unusually repetitious of common words." Though Nelson refers to Miles' Eras and Modes in English Poetry, Miles reaches similar conclusions in "Blake's Frame of Language," in William Blake: Essays in Honour of Sir Geoffrey Keynes, p. 86-95.

[22] Martin Nurmi, Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell (Ohio: Kent State University Bulletin, 1957), p. 19-20.

[23] Donald Ault, Visionary Physics, p. 31.

[24] Friedrich Nietzsche, The Use and Abuse of History trans. Adrian Collins (Indianapolis: The Liberal Arts Press, 1977), p.22.

[25] John Howard, "An Audience for The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," Blake Studies 3(1970), p.37.

[26] This unlikely connection seems less surprising in the light of Blake's annotations to the works of Swedenborg. See especially p. 595 of The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, where Blake criticizes Swedenborg for his explicit praise of science and "the Summit of Understanding which is called Rational."

[27] G.R. Sabri-Tabrizi, The "Heaven" and "Hell" of William Blake (New York: International Publishers, 1973), p.79.

[28] See Harold Bloom's commentary in The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p. 809-810.

[29] Bloom quotes Chatterton's lines on p.811 of the Erdman edition:

How dydd I know thatt ev'ry darte
That cutte the airie waie,
Myghte nott fynde passage toe my harte,
And close myne eyes for aie?

Blake's revision seems to chide the poet for his timid and suspicious outlook, but as Bloom says elsewhere, it is difficult to "mark the limits of ... irony" in The Marriage. See "Dialectic in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," PMLA LXIII (1958), p.501.

[30] John Howard, p.36.

[31] Joseph A. Wittreich, "Blake and Tradition: A Prefatory Note," Blake Studies VI (1973), p.9.

[32] Hagstrum, William Blake: Poet and Painter, p.5.

[33] That is, if we take "A Song of Liberty" to be part of The Marriage. As Bloom says in The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p.813, "This prose poem is distinct from the Marriage, but Blake associated the two works." They were frequently issued together.

[34] See Harold Bloom, Blake's Apocalypse, p.100.

[35] Nurmi, Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell, p.28-29.

[36] This same question might be asked if "The Argument" were approached from an altogether different angle. If the opening and closing couplets are read as metaphors for Blake's printing process, the images of the intervening lines might all be interpreted as metaphors for the paths, rivers, and cliffs left by corroding acid. The man who "rages in the wild" is Blake, reflected in the copper plate. See also the "Memorable Fancy" on p.35.

[37] The "mill" in this "Memorable Fancy" is, as Harold

Bloom points out, "emblematic of rationalistic reduction," and seems to be a precursor of what Blake later calls the "Satanic Mill" (162). See The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p. 812. Martin Nurmi points out the interesting fact that "Paris is about three degrees east of London(and Blake had reason to be familiar with longitudes, having engraved illustrations for at least two treatises on geography).... " See Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell, p. 51.

[38] Harold Bloom, Blake's Apocalypse, p. 85.

Chapter Four

[1] David Bindman, Blake as an Artist (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1977), p.72.

[2] In A Blake Dictionary (Providence: Brown University Press, 1965), p.419, S. Foster Damon refers to both interpretations of the word "Urizen," and mentions Kathleen Raine as a proponent of the latter meaning, derived from a Greek root. Both interpretations are common in Blake studies.

[3] See The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, especially pages 58-59 and 62-63. The reference to Newton includes a pun on "gravity": when Newton blows a trumpet "to awake the dead to Judgment," England's "Angels" (still used in the ironic sense of The Marriage), fall "thro' the wintry skies seeking their graves" (63-64).

[4] Karl Kroeber, "Graphic-Poetic Structuring in Blake's Book Of Urizen," Blake Studies 1(1970), p.7.

[5] Robert E. Simmons, "Urizen: The Symmetry of Fear," in Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic ed. David Erdman and John E. Grant, p.146-173.

[6] Anthony Blunt, The Art of William Blake (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p.56.

[7] Susan Fox, Poetic Form in Blake's Milton (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976), p.xii.

[8] Edward J. Rose, "Blake's Milton: The Poet as Poem," Blake Studies 1(1968), p.18.

[9] These events, however, are not to be taken as the stages of a progressive narrative. As further discussion will indicate, Jerusalem cannot be read as a narrative poem.

[10] This expression is common in Blake's works, but does not occur in the third-person singular, present tense, as I have used it here. Examples of its use appear in Jerusalem, p. 176, 185, 215, 216; in Milton, p. 96; The Four Zoas, p.331.

[11] Karl Kroeber, "Delivering Jerusalem," in Blake's Sublime Allegory ed. Stuart Curran and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973), p.357.

[12] See also The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p.35 and p.120.

[13] The most precise and thorough explanation of the place of Jerusalem in Blake's thought can be found in Ault's Visionary Physics, p.27-33.

[14] In "Blake, Jerusalem, and Symbolic Form," Blake Studies 7 (1975), p.143-166, Hazard Adams argues that "the poetic verbal universe that holds subject, deities, and object together" -- the poetic universe that Blake would like to see restored --

"is destroyed by a competing idea of language that claims for itself only the power to point outward toward things beyond which lies nothing; or the power to point outward toward things which stand for an order of mysterious beings or Platonic ideas disembodied behind the veil of those things" (p. 146-147).

[15] The relationship between this symbolic vehicle and Blake's "innate ideas" is problematic, and nowhere discussed by Blake. Presumably, since the text does not point elsewhere, the reader either finds truth insofar as he imaginatively activates all particulars according to his unique viewpoint, or he realizes only the particulars that his unique imagination activates as "truth." In either case, however, what is "innate" seems to be one's disposition, rather than ideas.

[16] See The Illuminated Blake, p.280. As Erdman says, Los "is leading us toward a scene of action ... his arresting hand invites our attention."

[17] This equation seems confirmed by the fact that Blake erased the word "lover" before both "books" and "heaven" in at least one copy of Jerusalem. See The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p. xxiv and 144.

[18] In The Four Zoas, Blake tells us that Urthona, who was Los before the fall, "propagated" his Emanations in "the Auricular Nerves of Human Life/Which is the Earth of Eden" (297).

[19] Roger R. Easson, "William Blake and His Reader in Jerusalem," in Blake's Sublime Allegory ed. Stuart Curran and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. (Madison: University of

Wisconsin Press, 1973), p. 309-328.

[20] Easson, p. 309.

[21] Easson, p. 320.

[22] Easson, p. 316.

[23] Easson, p. 312.

[24] Easson, p. 312.

[25] Easson, p. 317.

[26] Easson, p. 318.

[27] Hazard Adams, "Blake, Jerusalem, and Symbolic Form," p. 155.

[28] Henry Lesnick, "Narrative Structure and the Antithetical Vision of Jerusalem," in Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic, p. 39.

[29] Karl Kiralis, "The Theme and Structure of William Blake's Jerusalem," in The Divine Vision ed. Vivian de Sola Pinto (London: Victor Gollancz, 1957), p. 141-162. For Rose's interpretation, see "The Structure of Blake's Jerusalem," Bucknell Review 11(1963), 35-54.

[30] Irene Chayes, "The Marginal Design on Jerusalem 12," Blake Studies 7(1974), p.51-76.

[31] E.B. Murray, "Jerusalem Reversed," Blake Studies 7 (1974), p. 12. The structural interpretations of Jerusalem briefly summarized in this paragraph represent a very small proportion of those offered by Blake scholars. For a fuller though by no means exhaustive account of these interpretations, I refer the reader to Stuart Curran, "The Structures of Jerusalem," in Blake's Sublime Allegory, p. 329-346.

[32] Stuart Curran, "The Structures of Jerusalem," p. 331.

[33] Hazard Adams, "Blake, Jerusalem, and Symbolic Form," p. 151.

[34] V.A. de Luca, "Proper Names in the Structural Design of Blake's Myth-Making," Blake Studies 8(1975), p. 5.

[35] Blake's wording here is curiously similar to Locke's remark, "Names made at pleasure, neither alter the nature of things, nor make us understand them, but as they are signs of and stand for determined ideas" (II,xiii, 18).

[36] Susan Fox, "The Structure of a Moment: Parallelism in the Two Books of Blake's Milton," Blake Studies 8(1975), p.5.

[37] De Luca, "Proper Names," p. 7.

[38] The Illuminated Blake, p. 292.

[39] This denial of a visual response from the reader is quite characteristic of Jerusalem. One need only examine the fifth plate of the poem to discover how difficult it is to picture in the mind's eye the scene Blake describes. It may be that Blake is discouraging a habitual response to description as depiction of nature, just as he discourages a habitual response to narration as depiction of succeeding events.

[40] De Luca, "Proper Names," p. 7.

[41] See The Book of Job illustrated by William Blake (London: Paddington Press Ltd., 1976), plate 1 and 21.

[42] Alicia Ostriker, Vision and Verse in William Blake, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), p. 195.

[43] Ostriker, p. 196.

[44] I refer here to Brecht's own term for the techniques he used to arouse his audience: "verfremdungseffekts." The term is sometimes translated as "alienation techniques" or "distantiation," but in any case the concept bears comparison with "defamiliarization."

[45] Ostriker, p. 195.

[46] Harold Bloom, Poetry and Repression: Revisionism From Blake to Stevens (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 39.

[47] In The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 304-308, Wayne C. Booth considers irony as a "communion, collusion, and collaboration" of writer and reader.

[48] In "Visionary Forms Dramatic: Grammatical and Iconographical Movement in Blake's Verse and Designs," Criticism VIII (1966), p. 118-119, E.J. Rose considers a similar use of "dark'ning" in Visions of the Daughters of Albion.

[49] I employ here the definitions of Richard A. Lanham in A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

[50] Ronald Clayton Taylor, "Semantic Structures and Temporal Modes of Blake's Prophetic Verse," Language and Style 12, p. 38.

[51] Taylor, "Semantic Structures," p. 33.

[52] Taylor, "Semantic Structures," p. 43-44.

[53] Taylor, "Semantic Structures," p. 34.

[54] Easson, "William Blake and his Reader in Jerusalem,"

p. 313.

[55] Easson, p. 313.

[56] W.J.T. Mitchell, Blake's Composite Art, p. 165.

[57] See The Poetry and Prose of William Blake, p.2 and, for similar remarks, p.35 and 465.

[58] Harold Bloom, Poetry & Repression (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 29.

[59] Harold Bloom, Poetry & Repression, p.37. See also p. 4, where Bloom explains the term "misprision."

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